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THE

ENGLISH NUN.

A NOVEL.



Here, in the shelter of this calm retreat,
Did sorrow find a safe and tranquil home;
Did meek-ey'd resignation take her seat,
And bow submission to her Maker's doom.



PRINTED FOR WILLIAM LANE,

AT THE

Minerva-Press,

LEADENHALL-STREET.



M DCC XCVII.

19463-14115

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE principal circumstances of the following little TALE, may, to some persons appear too improbable to justify their introduction even into a fictitious story; and others, (more charitable) may simply accuse the Author of plagiarism. As an evidence of the possibility of such conduct as that of the Heroine, the Author refers the incredulous to

ADVERTISEMENT.

the well known circumstance mentioned
by Mr. Barretti, in the First Volume
of his Travels through Spain and Por-
tugal, and candidly owns that the story
there related gave the first hint of the
HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH NUN.



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ENGLISH NUN.

THE Earl of Montrose was one of those few Scotch peers, who, persevering in the Catholic worship, are excluded from all those offices, the income of which may serve to assist in supporting the dignity of the peerage, and at the same time permit the possessor to lay up a provision for younger children.

The estate of Lord Montrose was much encumbered, and its produce but ill adequate to support the expences attending the education of three sons and a daughter.

The latter was, when four years old, placed in a convent abroad; and Lord Dudley and his brothers were, at a proper age, established in the world by Mr. Frederic Percy, brother to Lord Montrose, who, having early in life

changed his religion, possessed high rank in the army.

On his proposing to undertake the care of his nephew's fortunes, he insisted on their abjuring the Catholic faith, and becoming members of the Church of England.

The Earl at first objected; but in the heart of a *proud* man religion is generally a secondary object to the gratification of ambition; and with *young* men is seldom a matter of any consideration; so that the Percys and Lord Dudley readily yielded to their beloved uncle's wishes.

The Earl saw the eldest and the youngest, by this step, exalted to high military rank, as the third was to naval honors; and he cared little by what means.

The Countess was no bigot; and, while she knew her sons to be virtuous and noble, she thought their religion might as well be the Protestant as the Catholic.

When

When Mr. Henry Percy was about eighteen, he received orders to join his regiment in the West Indies; and he had scarcely been there a month when he died of a fever incident to the climate. This was a most cruel blow to the Countess, (who almost adored her youngest son) and one that she never recovered; though succeeding sufferings of a nature more afflictive, permitted her not to indulge in uninterrupted sorrow.

About six months after the death of Mr. Henry Percy, his brother, Captain Percy, was killed in an engagement, on board the frigate of which he had the command. As he was a young man of the most promising disposition, his friends severely lamented his loss; but still there was some consolation to be found in the consideration that he had fallen in the performance of his duty, and universally lamented as an excellent and gallant officer.

There now only remained to the Earl and Countess of Montrose, their daughter and Lord Dudley. Almost heart-broken by the loss of their two youngest sons, they could not endure the thoughts of his Lordship still continuing in the service, and he reluctantly consented to abandon his profession.

The regiment in which he had served happened soon afterwards to be ordered abroad, and his parents congratulated themselves, that their beloved Augustus would not be exposed to that pestilential climate, which had been so fatal to his brother. But they little thought they were so soon to lose him, on account of the very circumstance which now afforded them so much pleasure.

A few days before the embarkation of the troops, Lord Dudley happened to meet Captain Douglass, in the St. James's coffee-house, and after some conversation had passed relative to the armament then going out to the West Indies, the latter said, jestingly,

"Faith, Dudley, I think you were a very lucky fellow to fell out, so opportunely as you did."

His Lordship, who possessed as much courage as most men, but accompanied with a very hasty temper, demanded what the Captain meant by this observation.

"Simply what I say," replied Douglass; who, being naturally giddy, and himself one of the best-tempered young men in the world, did not conceive that Dudley was offended at his remark.

"Then, Sir, I suppose you mean to insult me?"

His Lordship pronounced these words with an air of such angry haughtiness, that Douglass (who thought the affair too trifling to give birth to any serious consequences) yielded to an imprudent risibility, and Lord Dudley left the room.

When Captain Douglass returned to his

lodging, he found there a note from Lord Dudley, containing a challenge. Though he had never entertained the slightest intention of giving him offence; but, on the contrary, had a high esteem for his character; he was too much a *modern man of honor* to decline such an invitation; and Lord Dudley fell a victim to a piece of ill-timed pleasantry, distorted into an insult.

On this melancholy event Lady Louisa Percy was recalled from her convent, that she might endeavour to alleviate the sorrows of her parents. She was now in the tender bloom of sixteen, and, from the gloomy tenor of her past life, in the seclusion of a cloister, she had contracted a sedateness of manner, unusual at her age, and which gave greater expression to her beauty. She was rather tall, and extremely slight, though without any appearance of languid delicacy: whenever she moved, but particularly when she danced

danced, her form conveyed an idea of the dancing nymphs of the antique; but when her face had been once seen, her figure, (perfect as it was) ceased to be an object of consideration. She had those rare black eyes, which are at once brilliant and mild, and when they were fixed on those of a person she loved, it was impossible to conceive greater sweetness of expression than they displayed. Her hair was just light enough to form a contrast to the shining jet of her eyebrows and eye-lashes: her nose was Grecian; and her mouth appeared beautiful before the sweet tones of her voice, in speaking, made one forget whether she was handsome. She was fair, and with scarcely the slightest tinge of red in her cheeks, except when exercise, or animation dyed them with the most brilliant carnation.

Such was Louisa Percy; who soon became the successful consoler of her unhappy

mother. The Countess ceased to lament her sons; but it was evident, from the dejected air her countenance ever after wore, that she continued to think of them with deep regret.

As the Earl of Montrose had it not in his power to lay up any fortune for his daughter, he determined, if possible, to marry her during his life; and he had little doubt but what her birth, beauty, and accomplishments, would soon procure her an eligible establishment. With this view she was exhibited at every public meeting in the neighbourhood till she had completed her seventeenth year, but without having any proposal made for her; and her parents then took her to London, literally to be disposed of. However repugnant this proceeding was to the delicacy of Louisa, she was obliged to submit, with patience, to the mortification of being set up to sale.

Soon after the Montrose family arrived in
London

London, the Honorable Mrs. Willoughby and her daughter came to visit them. Miss Willoughby was a pretty girl of nineteen, very fashionable, very vain, and as giddy and ignorant as those Misses usually are, who are brought from the restraint of a boarding-school, and immediately ushered into all the dissipation of a town life; and seemed to wish to have it believed, that a young gentleman who accompanied them in this visit, was humbly devoted to her.

This gentleman, Lord Edward Lumley, was the third son of the Duke of Beaufort, and about the age of twenty-two; exceedingly elegant in his figure, and with manners the most insinuating and pleasing. He was a soldier, and consequently not deficient in gallantry, which he exerted in his conversation with Miss Willoughby, in a manner that proved him in no danger of becoming her captive.

During

During the visit, Miss Willoughby talked and laughed a great deal ; but, though both her chat and her gayety appeared to be particularly directed to Lord Edward, he spoke but little ; and though, in compliment to the humour of the lady, he was obliged sometimes to smile, and to reply to her silly remarks, it was very evident that his attention was entirely engrossed by Louisa. Mrs. Willoughby having taken notice of a very beautiful lap-dog, belonging to Lady Montrose, Miss Willoughby left her seat to admire and fondle it, and while she was doing so, Lord Edward found time to address Louisa.

“ Is that little animal a favorite of yours ? ” inquired he.

“ Only as it is my mother’s,” she replied ;
“ I am not fond of lap dogs.”

“ Nor of monkeys ? ”

“ No.”

“ Nor parrots ? ”

“ My

"My Lord, is not this an adorable creature?" cried Miss Willoughby.

Lord Edward gave it a slight glance, saying, "Very pretty, upon my word," and immediately turning to Louisa said, "What then are you fond of?"

"Of my friends," she replied, with animation.

At the moment Lord Edward would have given the world to have been one of the number: for there was a lively sensibility in the countenance of Louisa, that convinced him she had a soul. In a few minutes the party took leave, and as they proceeded to Portland-Place, where Lord Edward was to dine with the ladies, Miss Willoughby said,

"Well, my Lord, now that you have seen this Caledonian belle, what do you think of her?"

"I have seen so little of her, that I positively cannot inform you," replied he.

"Really !

“Really! Why I thought you seemed to take very particular notice of her, while we staid; and you must have very little observation, if, after looking at her so long, you cannot tell whether she pleases you. But come, my Lord, this is all affectation, and I must know how you like Lady Louisa.”

From the air with which this was said, Lord Edward, though by no means vain, could not help observing, that Miss Willoughby was piqued by the attention he had paid Louisa; yet expected that he would now pay a compliment to herself. He therefore said, with affected humility,

“Why, dearest Madam, will you so cruelly insist on my saying what must incur either your disapprobation or my own?”

“Your own, my Lord? I should thank you to tell me how?”

“How? By departing from candour and truth.”

“It should seem, then, that you must offend

send both, by pleasing me in your answer? I thank your Lordship. Women, it is said, cannot bear to hear the praises of each other."

"I," said Lord Edward, laughing, "should not have ventured to make so bold an observation. But you should remember, Miss Willoughby, the censure has been cast on beautiful women only."

"I should be glad to know," cried the young lady, with an air of vivacity, which, however, did not conceal that she was far from being pleased, "whether you mean that qualifying speech as a compliment to my person or my candour?"

"Which you please, Madam. Far be it from me to decide, lest I should inadvertently offend that on which you set most value. But I should think the language of compliment was sufficiently familiar to you, for you to understand it."

"Its sincerity,"—added Mrs. Willoughby ;
who

who observed a sort of archness lurking in the countenance of Lord Edward; and who, though she had not resolution enough to debar her daughter from that style of company that rendered her so vain and trifling, yet did not approve of her being so, and wished to check her in the indulgence of her levity.

“Your Lordship,” said Miss Willoughby, with returning good humour, “is much too incomprehensible for me; but let me seriously understand whether you think Lady Louisa handsome?”

“Certainly. At least I believe so.”

“You *believe*! Bless me, what an expression!”

“It is a very proper one, Madam, for I really do not know whether her features are regularly beautiful; the contour of her face pleased me; but my chief attention was bestowed on the expression of her countenance.”

“Which eloquently spoke the feelings of
her

her pure and enlightened soul! Eh, my Lord," said Miss Willoughby, sarcastically smiling.

"I might now compliment you on your penetration, Madam," said Edward.

"And with as little sincerity as usual, my Lord."

"Oh, no!" returned he, "It would be most seriously; for you have said precisely what I think of her Ladyship."

Perhaps Miss Willoughby would have been full as well pleased if his Lordship had not given quite so much credit to her discernment; for, biting her lips, she resumed,

"But, my Lord, your admiration of Lady Louisa may cease, for she is that most shocking of all creatures—a titled beggar."

Lord Edward was displeased at the pointed manner in which the last words were pronounced. as they seemed in some degree to refer to himself, as well as to Louisa; and he said gravely,

“Upon my word, Madam, your information does not concern me in the least. I can admire a beautiful woman, without informing any design on her heart, or person; and esteem an amiable one, without considering what her fortune may be, or whether she is inclined to bestow it on me.”

In the mean time Lady Louisa was replying to similar inquiries with those of the fair Henrietta Willoughby. As soon as their visitors were gone, the Countess asked her daughter what she thought of their young acquaintance?

“That she is extremely pretty, and would be much more so — Pray, Mamma, do you not think she looks out too much for admiration?”

“Pshaw!” returned the Countess, “I do not mean Harriet Willoughby, who is, I think, the most insufferable girl I ever saw. I mean Lord Edward.”

"Why, I am half in love with him!"

"Really!"

"Oh! yes, he is undoubtedly very amiable."

"Not amiable, my dear Louisa. Of his mental qualities you can, as yet, be no judge. Agreeable would be a better term."

"I believe so," Lady Louisa resumed; "Well then, he is very agreeable, and very handsome, and I do not think him deficient in having a good opinion of himself; and then his conversation is so whimsical, as if he was ridiculing one."

"Lord Edward is a very gay young man," said Lady Montrose, "and seems, like most others, to talk entirely at random."

"When he comes here again," said Louisa, "he shall positively find some one else to converse with."

"Did his Lordship mention any intention of coming again?" inquired Lady Montrose.

C

"Not

"Not positively, Mamma; but he said something of being our cousin, I think."

"I hope," rejoined the Countess, "that he may repeat his visit. The Duke of Beaufort's grandmother and mine were sisters. But the families have long been disunited, owing, as I believe, to my great aunt marrying a Protestant, though a Duke."

Nothing farther was, at that time, said on the subject; and the following morning Lord Edward Lumley called. He was admitted to Lady Montrose's dressing-room, where she was sitting alone. She arose at his entrance, saying,

"To what cause am I to attribute the unexpected honor of this visit?"

"To my desire," he replied, bowing, "of claiming a relationship, which I fear I may find you unwilling to acknowledge."

"Pardon me, my Lord," returned the Countess, with the utmost sweetness and be-

nevolence in her manner, "I shall ever feel proud to acknowledge Lord Edward Lumley as my kinsman, and happy to be entitled to consider him as a friend."

"Ah! Madam, such flattering language accords not with the friendly freedom of a relation," said Lord Edward.

At that moment the door opened, and Lady Louisa entered the room.

"Come, Louisa," cried her mother, "and receive your cousin."

Louisa blushed the deepest scarlet, as Lord Edward, taking her hand, and kissing it, said, "As Lady Montrose's kindness has led her to admit my claims on her family, as a friend and relative, may I not hope that the amiable Lady Louisa will not deny me the honor of being esteemed hers also?"

"Certainly, my Lord," returned Louisa, blushing more deeply, than before; while Lumley led her to a seat, and placed himself in one between her and the Countess.

The sight of the piano forte produced a question from his Lordship, if Lady Louisa played; and being answered in the affirmative, he requested the favor of hearing her.

While she was putting the instrument in order, his Lordship was looking over her music.

"You will find nothing but songs," said Louisa, "for I play very little else."

"Then I conclude you also sing them."

"I used to do so; but the principal part of my music consists of Duets, and I have now no person to sing them with me;" returned Louisa.

"Unless you will permit me to do so;" said Lord Edward, smiling, as he opened the book, and put, "If I love," on the desk before Louisa, who was by this time seated at the piano forte.

His Lordship's voice was a fine tenor, and he sung both with taste and judgment;

proving that he was acquainted with music as a science. In the course of conversation, he acknowledged that he played the violoncello; an instrument on which Lord Montrose had once possessed great skill; and Lady Montrose invited him to be frequent in his visits, alledging that it would be of the greatest advantage to her daughter.

His Lordship thanked her for her kindness, and readily promised (what he did not fail to perform) to call on them often; particularly in an evening, when alone, Lord Montrose could enjoy the pleasure of his company.

Lady Louisa was not long without lovers: but the Marquis of Halifax and Mr. Montague seemed more in earnest than ~~she~~ any other of her numerous admirers.

The Marquis, who was a Roman Catholic, was a sensible, genteel man, about thirty; of a grave turn of mind, and a benevolent

temper. He appeared passionately in love with Louisa, but was kept at a distance by the almost persecuting attentions of his rival.

Mr. Montague was a Captain in the Guards, and had (a few months before he made his addresses to Louisa) by coming of age, entered into possession of a large family estate. His person had more of fashion than of grace or dignity in it; and though his face was perfectly handsome, it was entirely uninteresting. For his mental qualifications, they were not very remarkable: He neither wanted good sense or good nature, though his vanity often made him appear deficient in the first, as his haughtiness did in the last.

The idol of a fond and weak mother, from his earliest years, he had been accustomed to consider himself as inferior to none; but when he met with those whom he looked on as his equals, (which were few) or chose to render himself agreeable, he was polite, and even attentive

tentive in his manners. He had an air of assurance, mingled with inconceivable nonchalance; and, when he would so far exert himself, he was imperious and fierce in the extreme. With such a character, Mr. Montague was not a man likely to make any impression on the heart of the gentle and unassuming Louisa. Confident of success, however, he demanded, rather than petitioned, for her hand, but was positively rejected.

The Earl, though he would (in consideration of the young man's large fortune) have consented to the union, did not chuse to constrain his daughter's inclinations in favor of a Protestant. Mr. Montague, was at least as much surprised as displeased, by this abrupt dismissal; which he attributed to the more favored pretensions of the Marquis of Halifax.

Though Mr. Montague was really attached to Lady Louisa, his disappointed love would not have led him to shew any resentment to-

wards the person, who, he imagined had occasioned his mortification; but his irritated pride for once overcame his careless indifference, and he dispatched the following billet to the Marquis.

MY LORD,

I have been rejected by Lady Louisa Percy, and I attribute my disappointment to you. I shall therefore expect, that you will meet me at whatever time and place you may appoint, in order to settle our pretensions.

H. MONTAGUE.

The Marquis was exceedingly amused by the perusal of this morceau, which could excite only his contempt and ridicule. He had too much sense to engage in so foolish an affair, farther than expostulating with this hot-headed and vain young man, (for whose family he *had* a high regard) and accordingly returned the following very laconic answer to his note.

“ I

"I am not to blame that you have been unsuccessful. However, if you think so, join me, at my house in Pall-Mall, at nine to-morrow morning, and I will satisfy you."

HALLIFAX."

At the appointed hour Mr. Montague arrived, and was desired to walk up stairs to the drawing-room, where the Marquis expected him. His Lordship rose at his entrance, saying, "I am happy to have the honor of seeing Mr. Montague in this house."

"I should be happy in entering it, my Lord," returned Montague, "had you not subverted me in the fondest wish of my heart. But wherefore do we loiter? You have promised me satisfaction."

"I have, Mr. Montague, and I will perform my promise; but it shall be neither with the pistol, nor with the sword."

"How then, my Lord?" interrupted he.

"By assuring you," said the Marquis,
calmy,

calmly, "that I have not been the cause of your disappointment. I love Lady Louisa, it is true; but I have never told her so, because I would not even seem to impede your success."

Mr. Montague appeared boiling with indignation: and the Marquis losing all his solemnity, (which he had with difficulty assumed) exclaimed, "S'death, Sir, cannot a woman, think you, do a sensible thing without being instructed by one of us?"

"Your Lordship means to insult me! but I insist on —"

"Softly, my dear Montague," interrupted the Marquis mildly, "wait till I have made my proposals to the Lady; if she rejects me, I shall just be in a humour to receive your fire. And if I succeed! If Lady Louisa deigns to smile on my suit, I will not, I am determined, risk a life, in which she is interested."

The

The share of understanding that Mr. Montague really possessed, enabled him to see the justice of what the Marquis had said, and his own folly. Restored to reason, he relapsed into his former apathy and nonchalance; and the Marquis, as he had proposed doing, offered himself to the acceptance, of the fair Louisa. Lord Montrose, at his request, undertook to plead his case; and accordingly one morning, while Lady Louisa and her mother were both at work, in the dressing-room of the latter, he asked the former, what she thought of the Marquis of Halifax? To which she replied,

“He is perfectly amiable and accomplished.”

“But his personal merits, Louisa?” said the Earl.

She answered gaily, in the words of Parnell,

“And if a shape could win a heart,

“He has a shape to win.”

There was a smiling archness in her eyes as she repeated these lines, that shewed at once

once her indifference, and her determination not to be serious on the subject.

"Precisely his opinion of you," returned the Earl.

"Then it seems there is a sympathy between us," said Louisa smiling.

"A sympathy," resumed her father, "that will, I think, render you happy in marriage."

"Marriage! Papa! Marriage!—And pray what put marriage into my dear Papa's head?" cried Louisa, giddily patting his head as she spoke.

The Earl was half angry, as he rejoined; "Be serious, if possible, Louisa! the Marquis did—."

"But suppose, Papa, I have no mind to be serious, any more than I have to—marry the Marquis?"

"You allow him handsome, amiable, and accomplished."

"Aye, indeed," replied Louisa, hesitating as if in doubt.

“And you confess you admire him?”

“Well, my Lord, if I do, you know it is only discharging my obligation to him; and my heart is still free.”

There was a playful sweetness and innocent archness in her manner, during the whole of this conversation, with which Lord Montrose could not be seriously angry; but assuming a stern air, he said, “I am by no means certain that it is. And now I desire that you may have done with this flippancy. The Marquis of Halifax loves you; he is not a man to be trifled with, or lightly rejected, like Mr. Montague. He is too generous to bestow a thought on fortune; but will at once raise you to rank, affluence and splendor!—Now answer as you ought.”

Louisa's countenance immediately assumed a serious cast: She came, and taking her father's hand, replied with respectful but solemn energy, “What *your* definition of *ought* may be,

be, I can easily conceive. But I will answer you, my dear Sir, to the utmost of my ability, as is proper for me to do. I have insuperable objections to the Marquis; who deserves a better wife than I could make him. I cannot love him, as in that situation I ought; and must therefore decline the honor of his alliance. If he wishes to hear my reasons from myself, (so much do I esteem him) I will give up the privilege of my sex, and satisfy him why I never can be his."

When Louisa had concluded, she kissed her father's hand, and left the room.

For some time the Earl was silent; but at last said, "Where can this girl have learned such fascinating persuasive eloquence! Upon my soul I cannot resist it, and must give up the fondest wish of my heart to gratify her caprice. Such it must be; for I cannot conceive any reasonable objection she can have to the Marquis; yet, she says, she will herself

herself inform him why she never can be his. Her affections certainly are not engaged!—Tell me, Julia, do you think they are?”

“Lord Edward Lumley,” the Countess began.—He repeated, with a sarcastic smile, “Lord Edward Lumley!—An avowed heretic!—No, no.—Her piety is sufficient security against that. If Lumley is the only person of whom you have any suspicions, you may set your mind at rest. *My* daughter will never give her heart to a heretic. For, by heavens! if she did, she should be a beggared outcast from my house, as well as affections.” Saying this he left the room.

Lady Montrose was far from being a bigot, in any sense of the word, and though many of the misfortunes of her favorite sister, arose from her having married a protestant, she was far from thinking them a judgment on her for so doing.

The Countess was of opinion, that amongst the bigotted, morose, and severe, of either religion,

religion, such a junction could not fail of producing misery to one, or, perhaps, both parties. But where both possessed good sense, good temper, and liberality of sentiment, it could not be attended with ill consequences to either. But had Lady Montrose even been of a contrary way of thinking, she knew too much of the human heart, to be ignorant, that it is not in the minds of young persons that religion is a preventative of love; and though she almost dreaded to inform her Lord of it, she was perfectly certain, that the frequent visits of Lord Edward were occasioned by an attachment, she had no doubt Louisa returned. As yet, however, no professions had been made; but music is well known to a universal language; and that of eyes is so too. Both had already betrayed to the observing glances of Lady Montrose, that they loved. The choice that Lord Edward (who always selected the music they were to perform) made of those airs that seemed best suited

suit to shew to advantage the fine voice of Louisa, and his manner of singing them with her, served to convince the Countess of their attachment. But Lord Montrose was still (as it appeared) wilfully blind. Lord Edward was the first protestant for whom he had ever professed a friendship; and him he seemed really to love.

One evening, when they had been conversing on some subject, on which Lord Edward's opinions proved such as particularly pleased him, he exclaimed warmly, "Good God! Edward, why are you not a Catholic?"

"Probably," he answered, smiling at the vehemence of the Earl, "because my family are all Protestants; and I happen to be in the army."

"Then, my dear fellow, since you attribute your present errors to local circumstances, you may, without hesitation, renounce them. Louisa, try to convert your cousin;

D

and

and if you succeed, you will be the two beings on earth most dear to me."

"Dear Lady Louisa," cried Lumley, "spare me, I entreat you. My errors (as you call them) I never can renounce; and never put me to so hard a trial, as to withstand so sweet a pleader."

"Courage, Louisa," exclaimed the Earl, "your power once acknowledged, your victory is almost complete."

"Well then, my fair antagonist," resumed Lumley, perceiving Louisa about to speak, "since I must stand your eloquence, let me at least shew you the obstacles you have to surmount, by shewing you what a devotee I am. The religion of a soldier is that of love."

The Countess, who had been alarmed at first at this conversation, was charmed by the delicacy of this lively turn from a subject, on which it was impossible their Lordships would agree; while the young man went on.

“Beauty is the shrine at which I worship! But I bow not before a senseless image. The divinity I adore is endowed with every mental charm that can adorn a goddess; and the incense I offer on her altar is not the cold tribute of flattery and admiration! I offer to her acceptance a heart warmly sensible of her virtues, and actuated by a love as pure as the Deity that inspires it.”

“Upon my soul,” cried the Earl, laughing, “your mode of worship is a pretty one. Why, Ned, thou art a perfect enthusiast in religion, in thy own way! Well, Louisa, what say you to this?”

Lady Louisa had betrayed evident uneasiness during the whole time Lumley had been speaking; and now appearing resolved to know the true state of his heart, she said, with apparent calmness, “That the divinity of Lord Edward Lumley’s worship is happy in so fervent a votary; and it only remains

to be proved, whether she is worthy of his partiality."

"To doubt her merits," returned Lumley, "were indeed a crime. In every mental and personal charm she is unequalled, except by Lady Louisa herself."

"Oh! my conscience, Ned," said Lord Montrose, "you are a brave man, to say so much before my daughter. Do you forget, that no woman can bear to be told, that she is not superior to the whole sex?"

"Lady Louisa's virtues, my Lord, are too similar to those of my mistress, for me to have any fears. And now, sweet my cuz. plead you the cause of your religion."

"To attempt to warp your faith, my Lord, would, I doubt, be a thankless office; and my influence is not, I imagine, of consequence enough."

As she was speaking Lady Louisa advanced to the piano, and struck the keys in such a manner

manner, that if she did not conclude the sentence, no person could tell how. Lumley followed her, and dropping on one knee beside her, said with enthusiasm, though in a low voice, "Here, since you forbid not my worship, shall my homage ever be paid; and never can my devotion be less fervent, than at present, when my adoration is declared."

Had Louisa been indifferent to her lover, this unexpected declaration, and the manner of it, would have rendered her confusion extreme; but the idea of her parents having seen Lumley kneeling to her, and passionately declaring his sentiments, was almost too overcoming. His words, however, had been heard only by herself, and his attitude appeared assumed, merely to look for the music-book that he now took from under the instrument, and placed on the desk before Louisa. She mechanically sat down, but she beheld not the song on which her eyes were fixed;

and every sense was absorbed in a deep reverie.

"Je vous adore!" said Lumley, in a low tone. The sound of his voice aroused Louisa, and she suddenly turned towards him. Her eyes met his, and the sweet smile that beamed on her ingenuous countenance satisfied her lover. Certain, from his own feelings, that she would not have power to sing, he pointed out a favorite lesson to her, and she began to ~~sing~~^{play} it.

By the time it was concluded she had regained sufficient composure to join Lord Edward, in two or three Duets. They then ceased. Lady Louisa left not the instrument; and Edward leaning on the back of her chair, conversed with her, and Lord Montrose, who stood beside him.

Louisa was speaking, and, with her head thrown back, was looking up in his face, when Lord Edward, unable to resist the temptation, stooped suddenly and kissed her forehead

forehead before she was aware. Between confusion and displeasure, she coloured; and Lord Edward tapping her cheek said, "If you are angry I shall repeat the offence."

"Louisa," cried the Earl, "you have no right, for you fairly challenged him."

"It was unintentionally, then, my Lord, and consequently deserved not punishment."

"Punishment!" he repeated, laughing, "Oh! the importance of those girls! As if a kiss was worth quarreling for! Come, come, make peace directly."

Louisa had risen, and Lumley raising both her hands, repeated the liberty he had taken, saying gaily, "Thus I take peace and pardon!" Louisa, though she was at first seriously displeased, now smiled; and, calling him "Saucy encroacher!" the affair was at an end. But Lady Montrose saw its progress, with an uneasiness which its termination increased.

The Marquis of Halifax had left town immediately after he had laid his proposals before Lord Montrose; and, on his return, waited on Lady Louisa, to receive that final answer, which her father told him she was ready to give. She received him, (accompanied only by her mother) with sweetness; and a few insipid questions having been asked, and answered, she desired permission to thank his Lordship for the honor he had conferred on her. "An honor," she added, "which my father has informed your Lordship, I must reject."

"He has, Madam, but I had hoped —"

"My Lord," interrupted the lovely Louisa, with a noble candour, "I am above the mean vanity of trifling with a heart like yours; and your generous attachment merits something more than politeness, from the woman you so highly distinguish. Were I disposed to be insincere, I should tell you, that my rejection of your hand proceeded from my unwillingness

ness to give you a portionless bride. But, my Lord, I have no such motive! To a man I loved I should glory to owe every thing! I esteem you as a friend, and might perhaps love you as a brother; but I feel not for your Lordship that warmth of tenderness you deserve to meet with, from the woman whom you honor with your hand. Bestow it on some person, who can regard you as she ought; and preserve only for me your esteem and friendship, which I shall endeavour to deserve, and repay with the grateful affection of a sister."

"Forgive me, Lady Louisa," cried the Marquis, with emotion, "forgive me for having distressed your ingenuous nature by a repetition of what pains me, to hear. For your generous candour you must consider me your debtor; and believe that you have not in the world, a more tender and devoted friend than myself."

He timidly offered to take her hand, which she

she presented to him, with so soft and sweet a grace, that a lover more confident, or less conversant with the human heart, would have derived some hope from it. But the Marquis of Halifax received the white hand of Louisa, and the smile that accompanied it, as a death blow to his hopes,

Lord Montrose now entered the room, and something like conversation was attempted. But it was only forced; and the Marquis soon took his leave.

From this time the passion Louisa felt for Edward Lumley became every day more discernible. If he commended any particular colour, or stile of dress, she immediately adopted it. His favorite songs she was incessantly singing, and if he happened to be two days absent, every rap at the door drew her to the window, and she listened anxiously to every footstep.

He was fond of Spanish; and one day said,
that

that he thought the study of that language and the Portuguese, was a source of the highest enjoyment; as it enabled a person to taste all the beauties of Camoêns and Lope de Vega. Lord Montrose was familiar with both those languages, and as Louisa had in her convent begun to learn them, she now, under the auspices of her father, returned to the study of them; and, by the most unwearyed assiduity, she was soon able to enjoy the writings of Lumley's favorite authors, in the Spanish and Portuguese.

With the greatest uneasiness Lady Montrose beheld her daughter's partiality gaining every hour new force; and, at last, determined to seem no longer blind to it, but to point out to Louisa, the consequences of indulging it. She therefore took the opportunity of Lord Montrose's being absent for a few days, to introduce the subject, and then added,

“ That

“That Edward Lumley is more to you than a friend is very evident. With the cruelest apprehension I have long seen your attachment; but forbore to speak of it, in the hope that your own good sense would instruct you how vain it must be to encourage a prepossession in favor of one, so totally out of your reach, Louisa: I know the doctrine I must inculcate is disagreeable to a girl in love.”

At the word love, Louisa shuddered. We are all the slaves of sounds and terms. Louisa had long experienced the sweetest emotions, from the idea, that she was beloved by Edward, and returned all those tender sentiments; yet at the expression, “*girl in love*,” her colour changed repeatedly; she laid down her work, and leaning her head on her hand, sighed deeply. The Countess continued,

“You must conquer this weakness: What do you conceive will be the consequences of it?”

it? Can you imagine, that did Lumley even wish it, your father would consent to your marrying a protestant, a heretic! One destitute of fortune! Think for a moment, my beloved child, of the misery you are laying up for yourself, in cherishing this fatal attachment. Are you even certain that Lord Edward loves you, and that, having destroyed your peace, he may not despise the weak girl, who gave her heart before she was certain of possessing one in return. Pardon me that I probe your wound so deeply, my task is painful to you, but it is not less so to myself."

Lady Montrose took the hand, that in supporting, almost concealed the beautiful face of her daughter. Louisa raised her eyes, filled with tears, and said, with a voice of anguish, "You have indeed, Madam, wrung a heart, which was never wilfully guilty of offence: I deserve it, for you have convinced me, that I love Lord Edward! But my affections have not been thrown away on an unworthy

unworthy object: for I could tear his image with indignation from my heart, could I believe him capable of the conduct you describe."

"Ah! Louisa," said Lady Montrose, shaking her head, "I am more than ever convinced that your heart is lost! It is thus that every fond girl defends the treacherous foe that would undo her; and attributes virtues to her lover he never boasted."

Louisa was shocked at this accusation. — "I see all my guilt, Madam," cried she, weeping, "I have deprived you of that noble candour that used to distinguish you! In tenderness to your erring child, you load the unhappy but honorable Lumley with contumely. Alas! he is but too amiable!—But forgive me, my mother, for having caused those tears! I will try to remedy my imprudence; and if I cannot forget, at least I will never see Lord Edward more."

"Louisa,

“Louisa, this must not be,” said Lady Montrose, interrupting her. “The world, or your father least of all, must not be made acquainted with this unfortunate affair. We shall soon return to Scotland, and then all will be forgotten. But, could you give your hand to Halifax, who still adores you —?”

“Ask not more, Madam, than human nature can grant. You must not urge me to marry a man I cannot love; and then, I am certain, I shall never be guilty of a fault in favor of one I do. Even you, my mother must detest me, were I to plight my vows to the amiable Marquis with an alienated heart.”

Her sobs prevented her saying more; and at that moment a footman brought her a letter. The hand on the superscription was, she thought, well known to her: distressed as she was, she felt a sort of pleasure in beholding it; but, unable to speak, she put it into the hand of her mother, who rejected it, saying,
that

that as she had no doubt of her honor, any letter to her should be sacred. A faint smile brightened the countenance of Louisa; but whether it arose from pleasure in the confirmation of Lady Montrose's good opinion, or the idea, that she should not be deprived of her letter, she could not herself define: she read, however, the following lines.

"Though personally a stranger to Lady Louisa Percy, the Duke of Beaufort is sufficiently acquainted with her good sense, and the generosity of her disposition, to take the liberty (as a father) of requesting half an hour's conversation with her, at whatever time she may appoint. That it may be soon, is perhaps, of consequence to the peace of an unhappy young man."

"St. James's-Square, March 1."

"Well, Mama," cried the blushing agitated Louisa, "what answer must I return? Advise me, I conjure you."

Lady

Lady Montrose felt for the pain she was about to inflict on the unapprehensive mind of her daughter, by crushing all those delusive hopes which, it was evident, the equivocal stile of the Duke's billet had inspir'd. She knew his Grace to be vain, sordid, and imperious; and she trembled for the scene the timid Louisa was to be engaged in. But she determined not, by owning the full extent of her apprehensions, to lessen the courage of the fair victim she was about to wound.

"Flatter not yourself, my love," said she tenderly, "with hopes that the Duke of Beaufort approves the engagement the heart of his son has formed. To me, the contrary is very evident; and it will be so to you, if you consider but a moment. If his Grace wishes to effect a union between ye, would he, do you imagine, apply to you?"

"Oh! Mama!" exclaimed the sweet Louisa, bursting into tears, and concealing her now pale face in the bosom of her mo-

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ther,

ther, "Oh! Mama, how unhappy am I, to have caused all this by my imprudence! But do not ask me to see the Duke! Do not ask me to admit his visit, since I am unable to bear his reproaches. From you, and from my father, I have met only indulgence, and how shall I meet the justly incensed Duke? He will think, (and perhaps will call me) the seducer of his noble son."

In an agony of distress, she clung to her mother, and seemed afraid to raise her face from her shoulder, lest she should behold the angry countenance of the father of her lover. The Countess embraced, and tried to convince her of the propriety of her granting the request of the Duke; and at last so far succeeded, as to prevail on her to write the following note.

"Whatever conversation the Duke of Beaufort may wish to have, with Lady Louisa Percy, she will have the honor of attending
to

to at ten to-morrow morning, if convenient to his Grace."

"Albemarle-Street, March 1."

As soon as she had dispatched this billet, the unhappy Louisa retired to her chamber. She now saw, painted in the most vivid colours, the misery of the destiny that awaited her; and which she had, till then, hardly dared to glance at. She saw herself divided from him, who could alone sweeten existence, burthen some and solitary without him. She beheld her mother, bending in sorrow to the grave, which the hopeless unhappiness of an only child, had rendered welcome to her, condemning while she lamented her. This picture was too dreadful, and she again, in fancy, turned towards Lumley. She witnessed his agonies; she saw him mourning the cruel fate that blasted all his hopes, and tore him from the woman he loved, and she thought no evil could be greater! But fancy presented one, yet more keenly afflictive.

She pourtrayed the amiable Edward, false to his first attachment, blest in the possession of some more fondly adored charmer! Or, losing in the embraces of venal beauty, the remembrance of his Louisa, and the pure heart she had bestowed on his youthful virtues.

Thoughts like these occupied her the whole day, and haunted her on her pillow; to forbid that repose her agitated spirits required, to enable her to support the fearful interview that was to take place on the morrow, she endeavoured to acquire composure, and, in part, succeeded.

When she entered the room, where the Duke (in company with her mother) awaited her, and when, with the most insinuating elegance he paid her his compliments, his likeness in figure and voice to her beloved Edward had almost overcome her. But with unaffected grace she curtsied, and suffered him to lead her to a seat near Lady Montrose, who, he insisted should stay to hear what he should

should say. As if impatient to perform his cruel task, he directly began.

“Till I saw you, Madam, I was at a loss to account for the romantic enthusiasm of my son Edward, in regard to you. His praises of the accomplished Lady Louisa Percy, led me to think highly of you; but since I have seen you I have found that I formed an opinion far below your merits. You are not, I suppose, a stranger to my son’s attachment to you?”

“My Lord Duke,” said Louisa, with a firmness that would do honor to a heroine, “when I acceded to your desire of an interview, I determined to be ingenuous. I am acquainted with the partiality with which Lord Edward Lumley honors me.”

“Comes your information from himself, Madam?”

“From any other, my Lord, I should not have believed the tale, however flattering.”

“ May I ask, Madam, how you received his professions?”

“ As those of a man whose merit made them agreeable, though his situation and mine render them [im]prudent. Has your Grace any more questions to ask?”

“ No, Madam, I am fully answered. But justice to the candour of your replies, demands that I should be explicit with you, and lay before you, what, perhaps, an infatuated boy would fail to do. You know, I suppose, that Lord Edward is my third son? His two elder brothers are expensive in their manner of living, and their claims on my fortune are of a nature, superior to his. I have procured him the second rank in the line he has chosen, and I can do little more. In order, then, to support him in the stile in which he was brought up, and which becomes his high birth, he must look for a large fortune with a wife. I have proposed many ladies to him, and have now selected one, whose immense
wealth

wealth is her least claim to admiration: She would willingly bestow her hand on him; but from a fatal infatuation he declines it. To you, Madam, I apply. I demand it of you, to point out to the deluded Edward, the impolicy of his obstinate opposition to my commands."

The Duke paused, and regarded Louisa with haughty sternness: but observing no traces of the weakness of her sex, on the burning cheek of the victim of his unfeeling arrogance, he resumed,

"To be plain with you, Madam, Lord Edward never can be yours; since *your* fortune, I believe, is but ill qualified to make up to my son the deficiency of his *own*."

"My Lord Duke," said Louisa, with a mild dignity, that seemed to humble even the proud and pitiless Duke of Beaufort, "as my mother's relation, and as the father of Lord Edward Lumley, whom I had injured, I thought myself called on to listen

with patience to your remonstrances, and the reproaches I knew I merited, however unintentional the offence. I have heard your Grace, and have formed my determination."

"So have I mine, Madam," interrupted he, "if you marry my son, you must hope for no favor. Edward shall not, with impunity disobey me; and since your attachment to him is so strong, how will you bear to see him, for your sake, an alien to his family—poor, and loaded with the curses of a justly incensed father? Remember, that I, in time, warn you of the consequences, that will attend a union so improper. Reflect on what the experience of numbers too plainly prove to be the case; that though love may smile in a cottage, while the delirium of tenderness lasts, and while surrounded with the elegancies of life; yet, when poverty enters, love flies far away, and leaves only fruitless repentance.—You see, Madam, what Lady Edward Lumley, (unless she is chosen by myself)

myself) is to expect from the Duke of Beaufort."

"*Your* determination," said Louisa, wounded pride and offended delicacy glowing in every beautiful feature, as she gracefully arose, "*your* determination I have heard; now hear *mine*.—Though for Lord Edward I would endure any, and every distress, in which he was not a sharer; and though, could he raise me to a throne, he would be equally dear to me, never will I become his wife! Since, in doing so, I must owe duty and reverence to a man, who meanly took advantage of my youthful candour, to treat me with cruelty and insult."

She curtsied slightly, and walked firmly out of the room; but the door was hardly closed, when the heroism that had supported her failed, and turning into the library, she flung herself on a sofa, and weeping, was insensible to every thing but the anguish that wrung her heart, from the idea that she had
given

given up Lord Edward Lumley for ever.

It had not unfrequently happened, that Lord Edward had visited the Montrose family, when they were particularly engaged, and he had been refused admittance ; and the Earl then desired him, always to walk into the library, without asking any questions, and that he might there amuse himself till the family were disengaged. It happened that this morning he had done so, and was sitting reading, when he saw Louisa enter, and was a witness of her agonies. He threw his arms round her, and entreated her to tell him the cause of that sorrow, which had so totally overcome her fortitude. He tried to soothe her, but in vain. The moment she recollected her situation, she endeavoured to disengage herself from him, but he still detained her.

“Louisa,” cried he, “you must not leave me in the cruel suspense your tears have given rise to. Did I not hear my father’s voice?—

voice?—It is so, Louisa, and you have been prevailed on to renounce me—But never will I give you up!”

“You must, my Lord,” returned Louisa, who lost the sense of her own suffering in her wish to spare him some of the pain she must otherwise inflict; “you must submit to the necessity, which commands, that this should be our last meeting. Here we must part for ever; and you must forget that Louisa Percy ever existed. Farewell!—may you be happy! and in hearing of your felicity, mine will be promoted.”

She was leaving him; and had already reached the door, when he sprung after her, and holding her hand, “Stay,” he exclaimed, “stay, and tell me why we must part? You would not, I know, trifle with one who loved you; but why must I forget that my Louisa ever existed? Is it because she no longer regards me, and is going to become the Louisa of another? — Oh! do not torture me with this silent calmness.”

"If I am calm," said the lovely heroine, with suppressed anguish, "it is to spare you the sight of the affliction it gives me, to part with you for ever. Duty and honor alike command the sacrifice, and I will be the first to make it!—Once more, ever dear Edward, farewell!—Obey your parents; and let me hear that you are happy with the woman they have chosen for your wife. But I must never see you more. I have vowed."

"Then my fears were prophetic: and the barbarous hand of a father, stabs the heart of his son!—But can you, Louisa, assist in the wanton cruelty that would destroy me; and blast the peace of my angel mother?"

"No, Edward, no. My love would save you from parental curses!—I could bear to be separated from you; but I could not endure your unhappiness, if originating in me. I could not behold your repentance, for what it would not be in my power to recall; and the idea, that my fatal attachment had in-

volved you in poverty and disgrace. Be calm, dearest Edward ; give not way to those agonies, but let us part."

Louisa began to be alarmed at the almost frenzied emotions of her lover's mind, that were discernable in his features: contending passions deprived him of utterance, and shook his whole frame. She laid her hand on his arm, repeating, in the softest voice, "Dearest Edward ! dear cousin !"

He stared—he caught both her trembling hands, and grasping them closely, he said, in a low reproachful tone, "Mock me not with those tender appellations, when your heart is insensible to the tortures you inflict on mine. Oh ! rather than part, let us immediately be united by a private marriage. You are not averse and insensible, Louisa. Those tears tell me you are not, and you will not deny me!"

"I must, Edward ; and from the conviction that I am right. I never will sow dissension

fention in any family, and the Duke of Beaufort shall not again insult me."

"Has he then been the monster?"

"Hold, my Lord," cried Louisa, interrupting him, "he is *your* father, and *I* have forgiven him. I did not merit his cruelty, or the ignominy with which he treated me; and I could bear it. But could I accede to your wild proposal, I should deserve his contempt, and the thought would indeed wound me. Never will I force myself on him."

"Nor shall you. Neither he, nor my imperious sister, shall ever intrude on my Louisa: — But my mother, the gentlest, the most amiable of human beings, will smile on our felicity and share it."

"Edward," said the sweet Louisa, with tender firmness, "that felicity would be only for a time: and, by marrying, I should destroy your prospects and your peace, without promoting my own. In a very few years love would be no more, and you would look
round

round you, with regret, to the dreary scene of your future days. You would then behold yourself in the bloom of youth, encumbered with a wife, perhaps a family, with a slender support, and doubtful provision; excluded from those circles wherein you had been accustomed to move; your military ardour damped by the impossibility of rising in the army, and struggling with the effects of a father's stern displeasure. Oh! Edward, When you looked towards the fatal cause of all this; when, (no longer blinded by passion) you saw one, no more prized for beauty; her temper-injured by reflection on her situation; of a different religion from your own, you will be miserable—and I should have the misfortune of beholding it. Were I alone to suffer, gladly would I encounter any evil for your sake. But the keenest stings of adversity, enter through the bosom of those we love; and every pang that wrung your heart would be doubly felt by mine."

"Cold

“Cold unfeeling reasoner!” said Lord Edward, with asperity, “but you have convinced me, that my love would be the bane of your happiness. It would make you, like me, a beggar, an alien, and a wretch. It would blast your hopes, tear you from Halifax, whom, though discarded, you still prefer.”

Louisa was hurt: she had fancied him above the mean jealousy which disappointed lovers generally express; and anger increased that firmness she had struggled to acquire, and had so nobly exerted.

“Continue thus to think, my Lord,” she rejoined; “you cannot long regret a faithless woman: and I am contented, if, in despising me, you can forget the pain I have given you. Adieu! when you see me no longer, reason will conquer the infatuation of love! —Adieu.”

Without another tear, or one lingering look of sorrow, but with a heart a prey to despair, Louisa drew away her hands; and,
leaving

leaving the room, retreated to her chamber; leaving the now miserable Edward Lumley deprived of every hope and consolation.

Scenes yet more trying, and more distressing, were preparing for the gentle and amiable Louisa.

The Earl of Montrose had, for many years, been subject to paralytic attacks; and on the next day but one to that on which his daughter parted from her lover, he was brought home in his carriage so extremely ill, that his physicians declared it was impossible he could survive a week.

Lady Montrose, naturally of a delicate constitution, sunk under this fatal sentence, and declined rapidly; while Louisa was obliged to return and attend to both. The Countess ever gentle and amiable, and now perfectly resigned, by her patience and affectionate sweetness, rendered the task of her daughter an easy one, so far as regarded herself; but the Earl, always of a violent and gloomy

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temper;

temper, and now, by turns, peevish, and irascible, was a continual torment to the mild and uncomplaining Louisa.

One day, after a long silence, uninterrupted even by groans, had persuaded Louisa that her father slept, he suddenly undrew the curtain of his bed, and called her to him.

"Louisa," said he sternly, "have you ever deceived me?"

"No, my Lord;" she replied, after a moment's hesitation, "of that my heart acquits me."

"Take care, child," said the Earl; adding, after a short pause, "you love! Louisa, and you have concealed it carefully."

Louisa's colour changed; but she replied with the ingenuous calmness of innocence, "You wrong me, my Lord, I have been guilty of no concealment. Had you demanded my confidence, nay, had you even seemed to observe my unfortunate partiality, I should not have denied it."

"Louisa,"

"Louisa," interrupted the Earl, "I had hoped it would never have existed. I had hoped that your piety, your duty, would have prevented you from forming a connexion with a heretic; one destitute of fortune; who, conscious that he was so, took advantage of a parent's easy confidence, to steal into the heart of his daughter, and betray her to ruin. This did that proud unyielding heretic—your Edward Lumley."

"Oh! my father," cried the generous Louisa, with fast flowing tears, "Oh! my father, wrong not so cruelly one, who was never guilty of intentionally offending you. If I love Lumley, the blame of doing so has been mine! He could not make himself less amiable than nature has formed him; but he took no pains to ensnare my affections; nor did he profess more than friendship for me, till accident revealed his love. He is not proud; he is not unyielding, except in honor; and if he is an heretic, it is because he

never was instructed in the tenets of our holy faith. And would you wish that a son of your own, should, for a religion of which he knew not the merits, abjure that of his ancestors, and abandon the service of his country?"

The effect that the pleadings of Lady Louisa might otherwise have had on the Earl, was now lost by this inadvertent mention of his sons. The conformation of Lord Dudley and his brother to the religion of the established church, Lord Montrose had submitted to witness with a tolerable grace; and, while they lived, gratified ambition closed his ears against the whispers of superstitious bigotry; but, since they died, the natural gloom of his disposition increasing, he did not hesitate to attribute the misfortune of losing all his sons to having consented to their abandoning the Catholic Faith. He now severely rebuked his daughter for having recalled the remembrance of his sorrows, and added, "You are, however, at liberty; and will, no doubt, use that

that liberty, as soon as my remains are laid in earth, to wed your heretic!—to give up your duty and your religion to love, and, perhaps, will be happy for a few short weeks; but soon, soon will the time come, when you will repent your headstrong folly, and wish, with anguish, that you had never trusted to a man, on whom, at his pleasure, your claims must cease! Know you do not, blind, infatuated girl, that such a marriage would not be lawful! and that your quondam husband might, when weary of your endearments, stamp you with a harlot's title; turn you and your beggared children from his house, to seek from an insulting and pitiless world, food and raiment!"

Louisa was shocked at the prospect he presented to her, of the consequences of a union with a man she almost adored; and perfect as was her reliance on the honor of Lord Edward, she trembled at the bare possibility of her experiencing such a fate, and was on the

point of vowing never to see him more, when the Earl (wearied with the exertion of speaking, fainted away ; and though he lived two days afterwards, the subject was never renewed.

From the very delicate state of Lady Montrose's health, it might be expected that she would receive a shock from the death of a beloved husband that would have terminated her life. But she seemed, though bowed down by sorrow, and reduced to a state of the utmost debility, to be in no immediate danger ; but, on the contrary, to be more tranquil and easy than she had long been.

Louisa one day (soon after her father expired) in speaking to her Ladyship's physician, expressed a pleasing hope that she might recover.

“ My dear Lady Louisa,” said the sensible and benevolent Doctor M——, “ it would give me pleasure to see you enjoy such a satisfaction, were I not in candour obliged to inform

in you, that those hopes are fallacious, and you must expect to loose this dear mother. A disorder like Lady Montrose's, (originating in the mind) after a certain period, makes rapid advances, and, if left to itself, generally ends without a struggle ; but if the sufferer is oppressed by any new calamity, it sometimes rouses those feelings that seemed worn out in former conflicts, and gives the mind, and sometimes the body, temporary vigour ; yet death becomes then more certain of his prey ; and the blow, tho' delayed for a time, fails not to fall. Your mother, Lady Louisa, will not remain long with you : Nature exhausted by some (to me) hidden grief, must sink under this recent heavy misfortune ; and a constitution naturally feeble, must give way at last. She is sensible of, and resigned to her fate ; and do not, my amiable young friend, by indulging affliction, for what can neither be prevented or delayed,

increase those sufferings, while it will not hasten their termination."

From this time the amiable Louisa tried to suppress, or at least conceal, the anguish she (on many accounts endured) from her declining parent: she read to her, when Lady Montrose was able to sit up; she sometimes played to her; nay, she even used to command herself so far as to sing. But the idea of Edward Lumley was so closely connected with every song in her collection, that they brought him continually to remembrance, and destroyed all hope of regaining tranquillity.

Louisa had continued this arduous task for near three months; when, one day, Lady Montrose's maid drew her out of the sick chamber, and informed her, that there was a lady below so very urgent to speak to her, that she had invited her to quit her carriage, and she now expected her in the drawing-room. Extremely surprised, and, perhaps, curious to know the cause of this urgency to
speak

Speak with her, she hastily descended to the drawing-room. On her entrance, the stranger advanced to her, and with an air of tenderness took her hand. This lady seemed to be in the meridian of life: the beauty and delicacy of her features seemed rather obscured than destroyed by the effects of evident ill health, and a deep dejection, that was visible in her whole appearance; which, allowing for the difference of female attractions, and those of men, extremely resembled Lord Edward Lumley.

With some hesitation she announced herself to the weeping and astonished Louisa, as the Duchess of Beaufort. Louisa withdrew the hand her visitor held, and, unable to speak, turned away her head.

“Shun me not, Lady Louisa,” said the gentle and amiable Duchess, in the softest accent, “consider me not as the wife of the Duke of Beaufort, but as the mother of your Edward. His attachment is no secret to me,
and

and I admire the choice he has made, while I am compelled to forbid his happiness. The duty of a wife, though opposed by maternal tenderness, must prevail; and I must exert my influence to divide my son from a woman so deservedly dear to him. Think not, Lady Louisa, that I am come to repeat the scene that you (sometime since) went through with my family. No—my heart bled, for you, and blushed for an husband, as my cruel daughter (who occasioned it) related it to me; but I come to say, that I have prevailed on Edward to leave the kingdom for sometime.”

“That he has not already done so,” interrupted Louisa, “has not, Madam, been owing to me. When last we saw each other, he was (I hoped) convinced, like me, of the absolute necessity of our never more meeting.”

“No, Lady Louisa,” said the Duchess, with an expression of mingled tenderness and admiration in her countenance; “generous
and

and noble as I know your efforts to have been, he is not yet convinced that your parting is inevitable, and must, I much fear, be eternal. But I have so far prevailed with him to go abroad for a few years, provided you will allow him one farewell interview. I know not how to wring your feelings by asking so hard a proof of your goodness; but for him I think I could attempt any thing."

"Wherefore, Madam," cried the agitated Louisa, "wherefore should we ever meet? Why should I grant a request so fatal to the peace of both, which, if we meet no more, may be restored?"

"Alas! just, as what you say appears to me, my son's mind is not in a state to attend to the arguments of reason and propriety; he seeks an indulgence of the anguish he endures; and, if you deny it to him, his reason may perhaps fail in the struggle. Oh! Lady Louisa, will you not, do you think, find some satisfaction in the idea of having soothed and alleviated,

alleviated, by your pitying kindness; the sorrows of one, who loves you almost to distraction? Will not that consideration be consoling to your mind, in the hours of separation from my son? For myself (long inured to suffering) sorrow has no such terrors, that to save my own bosom from a wound, I would wish to plant the barbed arrow in the heart of another: but when I think on my poor Edmund; when I see his brilliant talents and cheerful disposition, obscured by a fatal attachment; his fine person wasted by sorrow; my fortitude forsakes me; and to procure him but momentary ease, I could even afflict her he loves. Can you then, dear and lovely Louisa, can you consent once more to see him?—Ah! can you bid him think of you no longer?—Alas! I fear my request is such as it is not in human nature to grant; though if there is one in the world who is equal to such an act of heroism, it is yourself.”

Louisa felt at the moment that she was no
heroine

heroine in inclination: but trying to overcome her emotion, she replied :

“ The sight of your distress is torture to me, and I can no longer endure it. Let him come, Madam ; it is but one additional pang, and my heart will grow callous, or break in the struggle. Bring hither your too well beloved son, and be a witness of our interview and of our parting.”

“ Why, why,” exclaimed the Duchess, “ will tyranny and prejudice stand in the way of felicity? Did they not exist, with what rapture should I clasp the Louisa of my Edward to my heart, and bid them be blest. — Forgive me for thus afflicting you ; and let my misery plead my excuse, for my little consideration of your feelings. My heart is almost broken, but till it ceases to beat, you will ever retain a place in it!—At twelve tomorrow ——”

She could say no more, and tenderly embracing Louisa, she hastened to her carriage,
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to conceal her emotions.

From the time that Lady Cecilia Lumley had discovered her brother's attachment to Louisa, she had studied to find out the mode of informing her parents of it, that would be most likely to exasperate them against a woman she detested, for having robbed her of her long cherished hope of making a conquest of the Marquis of Halifax. She at last found this opportunity at court, when Lady Louisa was presented. Lady Cecilia observed, that the fair Caledonian excited the admiration of the whole circle; and she said to the Duke of Beaufort, in a sarcastic tone, and pointing to Louisa, "That is the pretty papist beggar, whom my brother Edward means to marry."

This was enough to inflame the Duke, and, on his return home, he called on his daughter for an explanation of what she had said in the drawing-room; which she gave, by relating all she had heard of Lord Ed-

ward's constant visits at the house of Lord Montrose.

The Duke did not take the trouble of speaking to his son on the subject; but at the first convenient time went to Lady Louisa, certain of being able to terrify her into giving up Lord Edward for ever; and at his return home from that memorable visit, related to Lady Cecilia all that had passed. Lady Cecilia, afterwards repeated it, with much exultation, to her mother, but failed in the end she had proposed; for the Duchess felt herself excessively interested in Louisa, by hearing of her behaviour; and having spoken of her to Lord Edward, heard enough from him to give her a pretty just idea of his mistress. This charming woman, who adored her son Edward, would (on seeing his heart was fixed on it) have immediately advised his private union with Louisa; had she not known, by sad experience, that such was the unfeeling and cruel arrogance of her husband's character,

ter, that he would (should he ever discover this marriage) use every exertion to have it set aside ; which might (by a man of his power) be easily done, on account of the difference of religion, let Lord Edward make what efforts he would in opposition to it.

When the Duchess of Beaufort left Louisa, the latter some time deliberated, whether she should inform Lady Montrose of the visit she had received, and the one she expected on the morrow : She at last resolved to be silent on the subject ; and gave such orders to Lady Montrose's maid, relative to the admittance of the Duchess and her son, as would render it impossible her mother should know that they were in the house.

Rather before twelve o'clock the following day, Louisa saw the Duke of Beaufort's coach stop at the door, and Lord Edward Lumley assisted his mother to alight from it. Though prepared to see him, she was so much agitated, that she required several minutes

to compose herself, before she could summon resolution to go down stairs to meet him. When she opened the door of the room where her lover was, the total alteration of his appearance so much shocked her, that her trembling was renewed; and, unable to articulate a syllable, she could only bow in silence to the Duchess, and sit down. Lord Edward had arisen as she came in; but, as much agitated as herself; he had not power either to speak, or move towards her.

The mental anguish he had endured had, indeed, effected a striking change in his person; he was grown extremely thin and pale; his fine blue eyes no longer sparkled with intelligence and spirit; but sunken and hollow, had lost all their brilliancy: his light brown hair, devoid of powder or dressing, partly concealed his forehead; and the negligence of his dress, without making him appear slovenly, yet betrayed the despondency of his mind. He spoke not, but with his eyes fixed on

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Louisa,

Louisa, sighed frequently and deeply. The amiable Duchess, anxious to relieve both, and put an end, as soon as possible, to this distressing scene, mentioned Switzerland ; whither, she said, her son was going.

Lord Edward started from his reverie, and approaching Louisa, asked, almost mechanically, whether she had any commands which he could execute for her there.

She burst into tears ; which he observing, said, in a manner, that proved him to be determined to hasten, as much as possible, what must inevitably be done ;

“ Lady Louisa, when I requested my mother to be an advocate with you for the favor of this one interview, I resolved not to let passion overcome my sense of propriety ; or to distress you with the sight of agonies, you have it not in your power (consistently with your ideas of rectitude) to relieve. I fancied that, to behold you once more, and to see you indifferent, would cure, or, at least, alleviate

my wretchedness; and that I could bid you adieu without reluctance: but, I think, I perceive that I am still dear to you; and I cannot bear to afflict you by fruitless lamentation. Your peace and honor require our separation; and, torn as my heart is, at the thought of parting with you, I submit. Will you, however, deign to wear this picture? — Sometimes, when you look on it, think of the original, and doubt not his friendship.”

With apparent composure he fastened a beautiful miniature of himself round the neck of the passive, and now almost insensible Louisa; and when he had done so, before he rose from his knees (for he had knelt to clasp the gold chain to which the picture hung) he threw his arms round her, and for a minute or two seemed to forget himself; then hastily rising, took the hand of his mother and led her to the carriage.

Though Louisa had been taught to expect that Lord Edward Lumley could never be

her's, and had almost succeeded in her endeavours to persuade herself, that so far from hoping it was possible she might at some future time enjoy felicity with him, she did not even wish it; the idea, that she had seen him for the last time, operated on her mind like a disappointment, and nearly overcame her fortitude. She was unable to move from her seat after he had left the room, till the noise of folding up the step of the carriage that was to convey him (with his mother) from Albermarle-Street, aroused her from this stupor of sorrow, and she sprung towards the window, if possible, to obtain another glance of one so beloved. But even this melancholy consolation was denied her: she saw the footman shut the coach door, the glass was instantly drawn up, and the carriage drove off. Louisa watched it as long as she could, and then again sat down, unable to weep, and almost devoid of sense and recollection. For several minutes she continued in this state; and,

and, at last, sighing deeply, "Farewell, dear amiable Lumley, we meet no more in this world; but there is a better life, where tyranny cannot again divide two persons, whose hearts are united like ours."

Louisa smiled unconsciously at the prospect of again beholding her lover, even after death, should have released both. And now, for the first time, recollecting the picture he had given her, she took it in her hand to examine it: It was a striking likeness; and what pleased Louisa more than any thing else; it was (she fancied) evidently painted since Lord Edward had been unhappy. She would have felt unpleasantly had his portrait "smiled when she was miserable;" and the placid dejection of the countenance encreased the likeness, while it assured her that the miniature had never been the property of another. In this, however, she was mistaken. He sat to the painter who drew it, at the urgent request of his twin sister, about three years be-

fore. Lady Frances Lumley (whom he most fondly loved) was, at that time, dying of a consumption; but, like most persons in that situation, was blind to her own danger; and as her brother was then going with his regiment to Ireland, she insisted on his leaving her his picture. The ideas that could not fail to occupy his mind, while indulging her in this melancholy fancy, gave a sort of sadness to his features, which rendered them unusually pleasing, and made him look older than he really was. As Lady Frances died before the picture was finished, it became the property of her mother; who now parted with it, at the entreaty of Lord Edward, who wished to present it to his love.

As Louisa gazed on the resemblance of the man she loved, her heart was softened with sorrow, and her tears fell rapidly on the chrystal. They in some measure relieved her; and pressing the portrait to her lips, she made a secret vow never to part with it even in death.

Collecting all her fortitude, for the performance of her filial duties, Lady Louisa now returned with seeming composure to the chamber of the Countess, who evidently had not many days to live. For the week that she survived, her amiable daughter attended her with the most cheerful solicitude, denying herself even the sad indulgence of tears, for her own sorrows, or the prospect of her mother's dissolution: Sometimes she would draw from her bosom, the little resemblance of her lover, gaze at it in silent anguish, and then, kissing it fervently, she would restore it to its place without one audible sigh.

At length the decisive hour arrived, and at about six o'clock in the evening, Lady Montrose breathed her last. Louisa was alone with her, and was supporting her in her arms, when she expired; and no sooner was it certain that she was no more, than the wretched daughter laid the head of the corpse on the pillow, and with the stoical apathy of despair,

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sat down on the bed-side to watch it. The nurse and maid, who had attended the deceased, endeavoured to persuade Louisa to go from the chamber, but in vain. She continued motionless and silent till midnight, (the time when she had been accustomed to lie down and try to sleep) and then rising went to her room. Her bed was prepared, as usual, and she almost unconsciously went into it, though without undressing. A short time afterwards her maid went into the room, and softly undrawing the curtains, was surprised to find her mistress already asleep; but rejoiced at it, as she had neither eat nor rested for the last three days. She accordingly stole out of the chamber; and, returning to it next morning, beheld the unhappy Louisa suffering in one of the delirious paroxysms of a fever.

For one and twenty days she continued insensible to her afflictions, and to the tenderness of her friends; but on the twenty-second day

day she recovered her recollection, and was pronounced likely to live. But to live was not the wish of Louisa, since her existence could never be happy to herself, and only served to embitter that of him she loved. She had a melancholy conviction of this sad truth on the day that her illness took a favorable turn. She had been some minutes awake, and in her senses, trying to recollect where she was, when the whispers of two persons, who seemed conversing behind the curtain of her bed, which was half closed, attracted her attention; and she heard a female voice pronounce, "If, indeed, you do not mean to destroy her, retire. If her reason is restored by this long sleep, I dread the consequences of her seeing you." To which the other person replied, "I ask only once more to look on her; and if it must be so, bid her her for ever and in silence adieu!"

There was something in the tones of the last speaker, which Louisa fancied she remembered;

membered; and the idea drew a deep sigh from her bosom. The lady heard it, and softly unclosing the curtain, displayed to the poor sufferer, the Duchess of Beaufort, with the melting benignity of an angel in her pale and placid countenance, leaning over the bed, and holding a medicine, which she softly entreated the patient to swallow. Louisa feebly raised her hand, and putting the cup away from her, continued to gaze intently on the Duchess, seeming fearful that the amiable vision would vanish. Her Grace now turned to lay the medicine on a table near her, and Louisa gained strength to say, "How good you are, my dear Madam! But favor me by telling me where I am?"

"Be silent, I beseech you, my love," said the gentle Duchess, "your recovery depends on your remaining quiet."

"Ah!" returned Louisa, "you may then satisfy me by an answer to my question. Why should I wish to recover, since my life
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is a burthen to myself, and a matter of no consequence to any other human being?"

"You are an ingrate," said the Duchefs, "in doubting that you have some tender friends—one at least!"

This reproach was uttered with a smile so sweet, as gave Louisa confidence, and almost a desire to live, that she might shew her gratitude to this inestimable woman; who now finding that to answer her questions was the only way of easing her mind of a load of doubt and anxiety, told her, that she was at present in the house of the Duke of Beaufort, and that his Grace had been in Paris for above two months. Louisa thought this was the proper time to know whether her half-formed conjecture that Lord Edward Lumley had been in her apartment was just; and she said, faintly; while a transient blush suffused her pallid cheek,

"I conjure you to satisfy me on one more point: Is not your son Edward now in the the house?"

“No, my dear,” replied the Duchefs, with some hesitation; “but why will you exhaust yourself with speaking? Pray be composed, and try to sleep.”

“Ah!” resumed Louisa, with increased earnestness, “I fear you deceive me. Surely I am not mistaken. I heard his voice, and even caught a glimpse of the uniform he was accustomed to wear.”

“I see,” said the Duchefs, who had by this time resolved to indulge her, “that you are not to be cheated: It is true that my son was there; but not Edward. My son James having got a letter for me, from Paris, and knowing how anxious I was to receive it, ventured to disobey my injunctions, that no one might follow me hither, and brought it to me himself.”

While the Duchefs was speaking, her own woman (an elderly person) came into the room, to inform her Lady, that her presence was required below stairs; and then took her place

place by the bedside of Louisa, whom she advised to try and get a little sleep. But Louisa found it impossible. The voice she had heard, which she still fancied to have been that of her lover, yet rung in her ears: The figure she had imperfectly seen through the opening of the curtain, gliding out of the room, she still imagined resembled his. She thought that the Duchess had, from kindness, deceived her; and wished to gain some intelligence from the servant, that might confirm, or confute, her suspicions: She, would not, however, express openly a doubt of the veracity of her kind friend; and inquired of her attendant, (preparatory to other questions) if any of the Lady Lumley's were in the house.

"No, Madam," replied Mrs. Chedley, "Lady Cecilia, the only one of her Grace's daughters now unmarried, is at Bath, with my Lord Marquis and his bride."

"Lord James is however at home," said Louisa, faintly.

"No,

“No, Madam, he is not; he is in Paris with the Duke,” replied Mrs. Chedley, adding, “and Lord William Harcourt returned to Oxford yesterday.”

“Is Lord James in the army?” inquired Louisa, making one more effort to obtain the certainty she desired of the deceit the Duchefs had practised; and she received for answer, another negative, Mrs. Chedley saying, afterwards, “Their Graces have no son in the army, except Lord Edward.”

Louisa was now satisfied; but repose was as distant as ever; and when the Duchefs returned to visit her, she found her much worse than she had been for some hours. But this she attributed to the patient's recollection of the loss she had sustained in Lady Montrose; for, though she knew that her young friend was not one of those querulous complainers, whose sorrows are always most severely felt by those around them, whom they torture with the expression of their grief, she
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knew her to possess infinite sensibility, and the sincerest affection for her deceased mother.

It is time, however, to account for the events just related, by a history of the three preceeding weeks.

As soon as Lady Louisa's maid saw the situation of her mistress, on the morning after the Countess died, she called in the worthy Doctor M—— to her assistance; who declared the unhappy sufferer to be in extreme danger, unless the greatest care was taken of her; and desired to be informed of the least change in her disorder immediately on its taking place. As soon as he had given those directions, and written to inform the present Earl of Montrose of the death of his relation, and the illness of Lady Louisa, he was returning to his chariot, but was stopped by the Duchess of Beaufort.

This lady having stopped at the door, in her carriage, to inquire (as she often did) for Lady Montrose, was informed of the situation
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of the family; and hearing Doctor M—— was in the house, entered, in order to ask his opinion of Louisa's indisposition.

"Her situation is extremely hazardous," replied the Doctor, "Her fate entirely depends on the manner in which she is treated; and the time when she recovers her recollection, now entirely lost."

"Do you not yourself mean to attend her?" enquired the Duchefs.

"I will prescribe for her," he answered, "and, as much as is in my power, attend to her; but the constant solicitude of a friend would do more towards restoring Lady Louisa than the prescriptions of the whole faculty. Her disorder is principally mental, and originates in some secret sorrow, which has for a long time preyed on her health, more than in the death of Lady Montrose. It is many weeks since my lovely young friend seemed perfectly resigned to the expected misfortune, which has now fallen upon her;
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and I rather believe her illness to be owing to the efforts she has lately made to be cheerful, when, I have reason to believe, her heart was breaking. If she should recover her senses, and be restored to the remembrance of her sorrows, before the crisis of her fate arrives, I fear it will be a fatal one; and only the most minute and watchful attention can save her."

"Do you think, Doctor," said the Duchess hesitatingly, "that the sight of any person who may recall to mind the cause of the sorrow you imagine harraßes the spirits of the invalid would be prejudicial to her?"

"I will speak freely to your Grace," returned the physician, (who well knew what occasioned Louisa's secret dejection) "and I will tell you that there is a person in the world, whom to see, would, in all probability destroy her."

"But, in order to reconcile her to events that have long afflicted her, she must be led to think of them; that, by doing so, her own

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excellent heart and refined understanding may teach her to look on irremediable sorrows with calm resignation."

From these words, and the manner in which Doctor M—— delivered them, the Duchefs easily perceived he was no stranger to the interest she, through her son, felt in the fate of Louisa: She therefore spoke to him of both with candour; and after some little consultation it was determined, that (as it could be done without much risk) Louisa should be removed to the Duchefs of Beaufort's house, in St. James's-Square, which (as it had been left to her since her marriage) she looked upon as more particularly her own, than any house of the Duke of Beaufort's could be.

To this measure the Duchefs was determined by two considerations, besides that of her pity for the friendless Louisa. First, she could not leave home for any period above an hour or two, as her son Edward was just then

then recovering from a long and lingering illness, the consequence of hopeless unhappiness: and secondly, the late Lady Montrose's house, in Albermarle-Street, devolved to the young Earl, her heir at law; and though his Lordship was a most amiable youth, his uncle, who was his guardian, was of a character the very reverse of polite, considerate, and generous.

In a few days Louisa recovered surprisingly; the mild serenity of her countenance was restored, and her heart seemed, for a time, to have forgot its sorrows: She spoke of her mother's death as an event too desirable (from her state of mind, and wretched health) to be lamented; and she expressed the most lively gratitude to the Duchess, for her attention to herself. This charming woman used to check Louisa, for what she called her impatience, under the shadow of an obligation; and she was forced to be silent.

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But though Louisa was forbidden to speak, she yet felt sensible regret at the restraint she would not doubt her presence imposed on her truly maternal friend. She saw that the Duchess deprived herself of the company of her favorite son, (whom, though his name was never mentioned, she believed to be under the same roof) on her account; and she even doubted if the Duke would not be displeased at her remaining so long in his house, though he was himself absent from it, and resolved to take the first opportunity of declaring to the Duchess her intention of retiring to the English convent in Lisbon, there to seclude herself from the world for ever. The late Earl of Montrose had, till the death of his sons awakened his tenderness for his daughter, always intended that she should take the veil there; and, she thought, she would now be complying, with what would have been his desire, had he lived to declare it.

Louisa

Louisa was soon enabled to make known her design to the Duchess; who, with secret reluctance, was obliged to say, she thought her immediate retirement an eligible plan; and it was decreed, that in nine weeks from the death of Lady Montrose, Louisa should depart for Portugal.

One evening, a few days previous to their separation, as Louisa and the Duchess were sitting alone, the conversation happened to turn on past events; and the latter said, "How often have I, my dear Louisa, (since my Edward first mentioned you to me) lamented the fatal imprudence of my marriage. You may, perhaps, have heard, that it was a clandestine one, entered into without the sanction of any of my friends; but you probably have never heard those circumstances of my maiden life, which I hope would lead you to form some excuses for my conduct."

"It is possible that you may in your own
mind

mind condemn me, for not exerting that influence the immense fortune I brought the Duke, is supposed to give me in my own family, to promote the happiness of my favorite son; which can only be done by effecting his union with his adored Louisa. But when people decide on the conduct of others, they seldom consider how many reasons there may be to render that conduct necessary. It is known that Miss Maynard's family, fortune, and connexions, were such as did not disgrace the alliance of the Duke of Beaufort; her inheritance was indeed superior to what he had a right to expect, as it is concluded that it procures her some respect from the man on whom she bestowed it. But alas! it is far otherwise; and her wealth is only thought on as a memento of the weakness by which she forfeited the consideration it ought to have acquired for her."

Louisa expressing a wish to be acquainted with those events of the Duchess's life, to
which

which she alluded ; her Grace thus resumed :

“ My father was the second son of a noble family, but of indifferent fortune ; and he improved the small patrimony left him by my grandfather, in the way of commerce, to such an extent, and so rapidly, that at thirty-two he was enabled not only to support a wife, but, from his large fortune, to pretend to and obtain the daughter of an Irish Peer. With this lady he lived, in content and splendor, for twelve years, when she died, leaving him no child but me, then about ten years old. For some months previous to my mother's death, nothing but her bad state of health had prevented my father going to the East Indies, where he had extensive business, and where his presence was now become necessary. As soon, therefore, as the proper rites, not of sorrow (for my mother, though an estimable woman, had never been very tenderly-beloved) but of decency, were paid her memory, he placed me at a boarding-school

school near London, and sailed for India. In about two years he returned to London, considerably richer than when he went; and, taking a superb house, brought me from school to be its mistress; an office for which I was by no means qualified, except by a taste for expence, and all sorts of gaiety. I had enjoyed the sweets of unbounded sway, in the mansion of my parent, little more than a year, when my father married a lady whom he had known in Bengal, and who had come over from India in the same ship with him."

"This lady, who was the widow of a Mr. Rayner, possessed a large fortune, a fine person, and was not above six and thirty; but she had a proud and imperious spirit, with a heart by no means flowing with the milk of human kindness; so that you may imagine she took no pains to soften my sense of the degradation I must naturally suffer, when my step-mother took possession of that place at the head of my father's household, for many months

months occupied by me. I (who was by nature almost as haughty as herself) but ill brooked the mortifications the new Mrs. Maynard hourly made me suffer, and my resentment, when I dared to give it utterance, only rendered them more frequent and intolerable."

"Ah! my Louisa, how do young people, who have never known calamity, repine at events, which, when more conversant with the world and its sorrows, they look back to as trifles, in comparison with present evils. The contemptuous treatment, and sometimes the asperity of my step-mother, I at that time considered as the cruelest persecution; and though my father had only been to blame in making me, at fourteen, mistress of his house, and of myself; I was rather inclined to accuse him of want of paternal affection, in permitting his wife to check me in the slightest degree. The winter following his marriage the Duke of Beaufort professed himself my lover.

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He was then remarkably handsome, and every way qualified to make an impression on my heart. It was true that he was near twice my own age; but I thought (like most girls) that circumstance encreased the compliment paid to my attractions by his Grace's proposals; as it was not merely an inexperienced boy whom I had captivated. You may perhaps wonder when I tell you, that the Duke was (immediately on declaring himself) positively rejected by my father; and the reason will no doubt surprise you, when I inform you, that it was the rank of my suitor."

'My Lord Duke,' said my father, I have no objection to you as a husband to my daughter, except that you are not a trader. I know what it is to be of an ancient an honorable family: once an epithet of distinction was attached to my name, but I never knew it of any advantage to me, and I am now plain Mr. Thomas Maynard. My fortune was made by a successful attention to commerce;

mercé; and on a British merchant I mean to bestow it at my death. Francis shall inherit my wealth, but she must share it with a husband, who will not look down on her as the child of an insignificant cit.'

"My father repeated all this to me, and forbid me to think of the Duke of Beaufort more; a command I promised, and (at that time) seriously intended to obey. My resolution was not, however, proof against the arguments my lover, whenever we met (which he contrived should be frequently) used to persuade me that I injured not only myself, but the world in general, by persisting in my rejection of the proposals he made me, to venture to the borders of Scotland, with him. At last I yielded to his entreaties, and gave him a solemn promise to be his whenever I had it in my power to do so, without travelling to the other end of the kingdom with him; an imprudence from which I still shrunk. For two months that we remained in town
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after I made this engagement, I only saw the Duke twice, as he was most of the time on a visit to his relations in Wales. At parting he entreated me to write to him; but this I steadily refused, from some remaining sense of propriety; insisting also, that he should not attempt to address me by letter, on pain of my renouncing him for ever. But I was not then aware that the threat I made use of, to prevent his holding any communication with me, gave him to understand how entirely my heart was devoted to him; by proving in what light I considered our final separation: that I believed it a punishment for the most daring imprudence he could be guilty of, that of attempting to introduce a correspondence."

"In the beginning of June, my father and Mrs. Maynard set out to spend some time with a Mr. Rayner, (who was brother-in-law to the latter) and took me with them. Mr. Rayner's house was within half a mile of the
Scottish

Scottish borders, in the county of Northumberland; and as I had never been so far north before, I was much pleased with the total difference of the country there and about London, I was just at that age when novelty is most gratifying, and as I had never been accustomed to rise early at home, I now took a sort of childish pleasure in getting up several hours before the rest of the family, and walking till breakfast. In one those rambles the Duke of Beaufort suddenly presented himself to my astonished eyes; and having, in the tenderest manner, congratulated me on my good looks, and himself on the happiness of having at last met with me; he reminded me of my promise to give him my hand, whenever I could do so without impropriety or suspicion. From the latter I knew we were secure; and I endeavoured to stifle my sense of the former, when I found that my lover seemed to resent the objections I made to his plan; which was this:—

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To pursue the walk we were in, which led through a wood of about two hundred yards in length, to the house of a Scottish clergyman, whom, as I found afterwards, the Duke had prepared to be ready to unite us."

"I consented, Louisa, and returned to Mr. Rayner's a *wife*. Oh! that before I had become such, I had known what I was since to endure. But it could not be. Trembling with mixed sensations of delight and fear, I entered the breakfasting parlour, where my father was sitting with the rest of the family. As the tea was already poured out, Mr. James Rayner (the son of our host) drew a chair to the table for me and offered to take off my cloak; I was too much agitated to reject this little mark of politeness, which produced another from my father, who, taking both my hands, began to draw off my gloves. At the moment he did so, I recollected my wedding ring, which I had neglected to take from my finger. : however, as my father did
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not speak of it, I fondly fancied it had been unobserved, and when I put my gloves in my pocket contrived to leave the ring there also. I scarcely knew how the hour of breakfast passed away, but, as soon as it was over, I returned to my chamber. In about two hours my father came to me, and led me down to the library, where I was thunder-struck on beholding the Duke of Beaufort. My own confusion was too great to observe his; or indeed any thing else, till my father said, in a stern voice,

‘My Lord Duke, is this young woman your wife?’

‘She is, Sir,” said the Duke modestly, though with firmness.

‘And what do you intend to do in regard to her?’ again enquired my parent.

‘Whatever may be agreeable to her, and to my father,’ answered the Duke, bending his knee to him, as he pronounced the last word. My father appeared somewhat struck

with his manner, yet resolved not yet to give up his resentment. He now turned to me, "Frances," cried he, "what is it you have done?"

'That which has not disgraced her,' answered the Duke with spirit, answering for me; for, in truth, I was unable to speak. 'She has accepted the hand of a man every way her equal, and her husband now claims her.' Then opening the library door, he called aloud for the Duchess of Beaufort's carriage. He took my hand, which I trembling half withdrew, and looked towards my father. But why should I weary you, my dear Louisa, with my tale? It is enough to say, that my father did not part with me till I was forgiven, and on that day I went home to my husband's house."

"In four years after my marriage my revered father died, and bequeathed the whole of his fortune (amounting to above two hundred thousand pounds) to the Duke: giving it

it as a reason for making him his heir, that as I had once proved myself a disobedient daughter, I might perhaps, if left independent of my husband, prove an imprudent wife. My father had always been accounted a humourist, and perhaps he shewed himself one in this instance; but I am certain, that had he ever conceived that the two of my children most beloved would be made miserable without my having the power to save them, he would never have made such a disposition of his wealth."

Three days after the Duchess had given Louisa this little history of herself, the latter left London, attended by Mrs. Chedley and her husband, a decent reputable man. They had received orders not to abandon their fair charge till she arrived in Lisbon, when they were to return to the Duchess. Louisa felt sensibly all the value of this kind attention in her friend; and did not decline it, as she really found herself unequal to encountering alone the task she had to perform.

For the two first days that Louisa travelled toward Falmouth, she was too much occupied with regret for leaving her maternal friend, to feel much the painful idea of abandoning her native land: She had never been in the West of England before, and the novelty of the scenes that presented themselves interested her curiosity; and she then reflected, that she was only to pass through this beautiful country in order to bid it an everlasting farewell. So long as she could rest her eyes on the green hills of Devon, she thought she had not yet entirely forsaken the scenes she had been accustomed to behold; but when they faded in the distance, and she looked round on the barren lands of Cornwall, she thought her banishment already as compleat as if she had been immured in the walls of a convent.

At length the carriage entered the town of Falmouth, and Louisa, anxious to complete a disagreeable task, immediately sent for the Master

Master of the Packet, that she had heard was to sail the next morning. On her mentioning to the Captain her intention of taking her passage with him, he said, "I am already prepared for your accommodation; it is about an hour since your servant agreed for your passage, his own, and that of a female attendant."

Louisa now recollected having seen Chedley pass the chaise on horseback, within a few miles of Falmouth, and she doubted not he had gone forward to bespeak the packet, by the directions of the Duchess. She now remembered (what had not occurred to her before, and which her extreme agitation of mind and ignorance of travelling had prevented her noticing) that she had never been called upon for money on the road; and felt doubly grateful to the Duchess, for this last act of polite attention, which had saved her so much trouble. Louisa now received the Captain's directions to be ready to repair on board at day dawn;

and as, at this season of the year (July) there is very little night, and as, at this time, even that little was rendered as brilliant as the day by a full moon, she determined not to go to bed at all. About eleven o'clock Louisa left the house, and descended into a little garden belonging to the Mistress of the Inn, which overhung the sea, in order to spend the remaining hours before she was summoned on board the ship. This was the only time of her life that Louisa could have adopted a measure so inconsistent with her own sense of propriety; but she had no idea of there being any personal danger in her taking a moonlight walk in the garden; and as to its imprudent appearance, as it was the last night she was to spend in England, she thought that of very little consequence.

For about two hours she wandered among the flowering shrubs of her good hostess; sometimes reposing herself on a wooden seat, that was placed just on the point of a cliff
above

above the sea, which was now almost covered with fishing-boats; and at a distance she could descry the ship in which she was to sail on the morrow. But Louisa turned from the ocean, and in vain strained her eyes in the hope of beholding on land some object that interested her: she beheld none; she saw only through the white mist, that a heavy dew caused all along the shore, the dubious shapes of the hills of Cornwall. A little after one o'clock Louisa returned into the house; when she arrived at the little wicket of the garden, she was surprised to meet a stranger, who appeared to have been walking as well as herself, though she had not seen him till now. He bowed politely, but in silence, as he opened the gate to let her pass through; and she concluded that he was some person, who being to sail in the packet in the morning, had chosen to spend the night in walking.

At the hour of four, the lovely destined exile received an intimation that the boat

waited

waited to convey her on board, and with mild dejection and reluctance she repaired to the shore with her two attendants. Louisa felt a pang, for which she scarcely knew how to account, as she stepped into the boat, and sighed. Another deep sigh seemed to answer her's, and she looked round to see from whence it came; but the sailors and common passengers who were now crowding into the boat, with the dim grey light of the morning, would not permit her to see any thing distinctly. She was soon seated very commodiously between Mrs. Chedley and the Captain of the Packet, and the boat put off.

As they proceeded the sea began to glow with the brightness of the dawn, and at length Louisa beheld the dazzling sunbeams playing on the gently ruffled surface of the ocean, and striking in a strong blaze on the already loosened sails of the packet. This was the last sunrise she would probably ever behold in England, as the wind was fair and pretty fresh, it renewed her deep regrets.

It is thus that we are too apt, mournfully, to linger over those objects we see for the last time, though the view of them is productive of anguish; and though we know that our peace, in a great degree, depends on our never beholding them more, it is the greatest effort of resolution to tear one's self away. Once determined, however, Louisa was obliged to make no farther exertions, the packet scudded before the breeze, and had she wished to return, it would not have been in her power.

At length Louisa beheld, from the deck, the stupendous rock of Lisbon, and soon afterwards the varied shores of the Tagus, with the city extended along them; she even fancied she could discern the English Convent, whether she was going. As she passed under the rock, and was taking leave of the vast extent of ocean, she repeated a thousand adieus to England, and then fixing her eyes on what she believed to be her destined re-

sidence, she hailed it, in imagination, as her asylum and resting-place.

It is needless to relate any more, than that she was readily admitted a member of the English Nunnery; and at her own request her novitiate was dispensed with, and the two ceremonies of her receiving the white and the black veil, were to take place at the same time, at the distance of three days.

During this interval Louisa attempted several times to write to the Duchess; but she found the task a difficult one, and it was only in the evening preceding her profession that she wrote the following lines, and delivered them to Mrs. Chedley, who was to leave Lisbon as soon as the solemn ceremony had taken place.

TO HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF BEAUFORT.

“To-morrow, my revered benefactress,
to-morrow I abjure the tumultuous pleasures
of the world, and its active miseries for ever.

To-morrow

To-morrow that grate will close on me that will shut me from liberty, my friends, and country, as effectually as that one will do, which in a few years will close on my lifeless remains: I hail the former, but the latter would be more welcome to me, since it would shut out memory, that never-ceasing torment, which stings the heart most keenly, even in the tranquil abodes of religion and nominal peace. Before I abandon the world, it is fit that I discharge all obligations I owe in it, which are of a nature to be discharged. Such is my pecuniary debt to you, and as your servant has declined receiving it, I shall now enclose it. The worthy and attentive Mrs. Chedley will convey to you a small memorial of your Louisa. There can now be no vanity in sending you (unasked) a portrait of myself, drawn at a time when I was thought to possess some personal attractions; the shadow of them is now all that remains, and I wish you sometimes to remember that such a being as myself once existed.

I have stolen the time in which I wrote this from prayer and preparation; and it is fit that I return to the performance of those awful duties; yet I feel unwilling to lay down my pen, while my gratitude to you is yet unexpressed: But why should I attempt an impossibility? I cannot express my feelings—I can only bid you adieu. — Adieu, then, dearest and most revered of women: — Sister Louisa must cease to think of the attachment of this world; but tell your son, that the last thought of Louisa Percy shall be for him. All my future thoughts must be of heaven."

LOUISA.

On the following morning, with a composed and pious dignity, that was almost faintly, did the young, beautiful and unfortunate Lady Louisa Percy accept that veil, which admitted her a novice, and a few minutes after, that which constituted her a nun. She had chosen to have the latter ceremony

take place immediately, that when Lord Edward was informed whither she had retired, he might at the same time learn that her destiny was unchangeable; and thence be more quickly reconciled to their eternal separation.

Oh the evening following she received the following letter.

“Now, indeed, Louisa, most beloved of my soul, I will bid you an eternal adieu! Till now it has been no crime to cherish my adoration of you; to hover round you, and sometimes endeavour to catch a transient view of a form so adored; and I have hitherto indulged in the comparative happiness of being near you. Sad enjoyment!—I must now no more hope to hang over your sick couch, and while an angel in the maternal character soothed my apprehensive agonies, with promises of your recovery, watch that lovely and interesting countenance. I must no longer attend your moonlight walks, or even in disguise listen to the magic of your voice,

voice, though obliged to preserve a careful silence, lest my own should betray me. I must never more please myself with the thought, that only a thin partition divides me from Louisa, that, in case of danger, I can be ready to assist her—or, happier still, perish with her.

“I have seen you for the last time, Louisa. I have seen you devote yourself to God; and I will no longer seek to draw your thoughts from Him, to a wretch like me:—Yet some times remember me! — Sometimes recollect how I have loved you; — or, if that would too deeply wound your peace, think how I have given you up. Be happy, angelic Louisa, though to be so you must hate your

EDWARD LUMLEY.”

Lisbon.

Louisa wept bitterly over this billet; but resignation soon conquered her regrets; or at least taught her not to indulge them. She

never

never forgot her affectionate gratitude to the Duchess of Beaufort; though her affections were afterwards divided between her and a young lady of a most amiable disposition, who resided for two years in the Convent, and who only left it to be united to Mr. Clifford, an English gentleman of rank and fortune, who took Lady Emmeline with him, to her native country and his own.

TO LADY EMMELINE CLIFFORD.

English Convent, Lisbon.

“How strange does it seem to me to address myself to my Emmeline, and to know that it must be a long, long time before she can see what I write; or I receive from her that tender sympathy wont to sooth my sorrows, and teach me to bear up against calamity past, and irremediable for the future. You are by this time in England. Alas! what would I not give, independent of the pleasure of your society, to revisit that land,

dear to me alike from custom and sentiment. Absurd as is the idea, I have often detected myself in cherishing the hope that some unforeseen event might lead me once more to my country. Like Goldsmith,

“In all my wanderings through this world of care,

“In all my griefs, and God has given me share!

“I still had hopes my latest hours to crown,

“And in those peaceful bow’rs to lay me down.”

“But wherever I lay me, my bed will be strewn with thorns; for where is the oblivious cup that will annihilate memory? Cure me of that, and your affectionate wishes for my happiness might perhaps be successful. As it is, I must be miserable! My sufferings are not selfish; they are more for others than myself. Pluck the barbed arrow of unavailing regret from the noble heart of Edward Lumley, and mine may then taste of peace.

“At the time when you bade adieu to Portugal, and to me; I stood on the terrace, and watched the vessel in which you were,
while

while it remained in view. Not a breeze from the shore, that swelled her whitening sails, but bore with it some good wishes for my Emmeline; but when distance and the shades of evening concealed it from my sight, my tears could no longer be restrained; and I returned to my Convent, a prey to the bitterest regret. I visited every spot, where I had seen you, and still remembrance

“Throbs at my breast, and turn’d the past to pain.”

“On going to my cell, where you may remember we sat, the evening before your departure, the open piano forte caught my eye. On the desk was your music book (which you forgot to take with you) laid open at that simple air,

“The last time I came o’er the muir,”

When last I heard you sing it, I remember I wept; but now I could not. My forsaken country, my unhappy fate, and not less lamented Emmeline, rushed all at once into my mind, and filled my heart with anguish.

I took possession of the chair in which you had sat, and gave myself up to sorrow. Every thing was destined to remind me of you: Taking out my handkerchief to wipe away the tears that had at last relieved me, something fell to the ground: It was Edward's picture, which, I recollect I took from my neck to shew you the morning we parted, and had been too much occupied by sorrow to replace. The features seemed more than usually melancholy, and I thought I beheld him sympathizing in my distress.

"You often asked me for an explanation of my enthusiasm regarding this portrait, which I often refused you. My reason for doing so was, that I believed it would be unkind to embitter that happiness you seemed to enjoy, by a retrospect of past events; but, like Sterne's master of the ass, "I thought so when you were with me; but now you are gone, I think otherwise." And I now rejoice, that even in the sad moment of separation,

tion, I had resolution to relate my mournful tale. May I now, Emmeline—or is it a crime to inquire after Lumley? Mr. Clifford knows him, for I well remember having heard Edward, in my happy days, speak of him with affection and esteem. You may see him! He may speak to you of me! Tell him, then, that his Louisa, in sorrow and restraint, still thinks on him with unabated tenderness. — Though, no—tell him not so. I am a nun, Perhaps I am wrong to let you see so much of my weakness, but I will not erase what I have written; for I would not owe your approbation to an ignorance of my thoughts. Adieu, my dear Emmeline—let not Mr. Clifford forget that he possesses a friend in your

Jan. 15th.

LOUISA PERCY."

The fair writer of the preceeding letter had now been seven years a professed nun. In that time but few changes had taken place in her, and none in her destiny. The glow of youth and health, were want to mantle on her

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cheek, sorrow, not time, had chased from thence; the sparkling brilliancy of her eyes had given place to a soft sadness of expression, that rendered her (to a soul of sensibility) a much more interesting object at this period, than when, in the first bloom of beauty, she made her entrée into fashionable life.

She was now something more than twenty-five, rather thinner than she had been, and too much so for the perfect model of a woman; but still her figure, from being a little wasted, had gained a look of delicacy and fragility which did not make her less lovely. Those who admired beauty, would say, that her appearance was changed for the worse; those who felt it, and felt all the numberless charms of suffering virtue and resignation, would decide, that if any alteration had taken place in Louisa, it was one, by no means unfavorable to her.

In those with whom she was connected in England, greater changes had taken place.

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The Duke of Beaufort was dead, and being displeased with his two eldest sons, had left Lord Edward Lumley one of his principal estates, which happened to be in his own power to bequeath to whom he would. But Lord Edward had lost all wishes to possess wealth, since it could not now purchase felicity; his Louisa was immured in a cloister, and fortune to him had no charms.

The Duchess of Beaufort was still the same amiable creature she had ever been; but during the three years that had elapsed since she became a widow, she was little less happy than she had been, except that she could now indulge her sorrows unreprieved by the gloomy or arrogant tyranny of an husband, who often insulted her with that imprudent attachment to him, which had procured — for him, immense wealth to gratify his avarice — for her, misery and dependence.

It happened, that on the very evening when Lady Emmeline received the letter

which brought her intelligence of her beloved Louisa, she was engaged to attend a large rout at the house of her relation, Mrs. Olland. She would have declined going, on account of low spirits, occasioned by the letter she had received; but Mr. Clifford, ever kind and attentive, insisted that she should rather seek in company to dissipate that gloom which hung over her. Lady Emmeline complied; but as she still found herself unable to join in cheerful conversation, she retired into a small apartment, where one of her cousins, the Miss Ollands, was entertaining a select circle with playing on the pedal harp, accompanied by her voice. The song she was singing happened to be that old and simple air, "Mary's lamentation." Lady Emmeline had often heard it sung by her friend Louisa, and it brought to her mind in the strongest manner, the amiable recluse. Rousing herself from a reverie into which she had insensibly fallen, she now looked round the company, and her

eye immediately distinguished one from the rest. It was a young man, in a military dress, very tall, and strikingly elegant in his figure, who was leaning pensive against a pillar of the window frame. In his pale and dejected countenance (which plainly shewed that he was not thinking of the song or the singer) Lady Emmeline fancied she saw something which authorized her to say to herself, "Surely that is a person whom I ought to know."

Miss Olland, when she had finished her song, struck the strings of the harp in a gay measure, and the young gentleman appeared to awake from a reverie; — he sighed as he quitted the place he had occupied, and left the room; which was soon after deserted by every one but Lady Emmeline; she was also going to leave it, when Mr. Clifford, accompanied by the melancholy young officer, came up to her, and the former, having introduced the stranger as Lord Edward Lumley, left them together.

For some moments both were silent; Lady Emmeline dreaded his introducing a subject on which her spirits would not allow her to converse without tears; and Lord Edward was evidently deliberating in what manner he could best introduce it. But his mind was too much occupied for him to give much thought to ceremony, and he at length said, in a voice and with a manner that inexpressibly affected his auditor, "Clifford told me, that his Emmeline was gentle and compassionate—may I then speak to her as a friend?"

"As a sincere, a warm one, Lord Edward," she replied, with difficulty concealing her emotion.

"You have been in Portugal, Madam," he resumed, "in Lisbon I believe?"

"I have, my Lord; I was educated at the English Convent in that city," she answered.

"May I then, Lady Emmeline, from you enquire for Lady Louisa Percy?—How is she?—Is she happy?—Does she forget——"

His

His voice faltered, and Lady Emmeline returned, "She is well; and if not happy, is at least contented!"

"She is blest indeed," cried Lord Edward, with quickness, "in a memory so little retentive! Would to God I had some charm to banish recollection: then, I too, if not happy, might be at least contented."

Lady Emmeline at first felt a little hurt at his thus repeating her words; but pique was immediately lost in her pity for his sorrows, and she said, "The present serenity of Lady Louisa proceeds from a consciousness of having done right, and from the mild comforts of religion. Time may reconcile one to any thing, and she has felt its lenient influence in favor of a mode of life so essentially requisite to her own peace, and that of those whom she esteems: but the task of forgetting she has not yet learned, since her chief source of pleasure arises in the happiness of those she loves, amongst whom, you, Lord Edward, are not

the least valued, and she wishes for nothing more than to hear you are happy."

"That can never be!" said Lord Edward, in a low and melancholy tone. "Destitute of enjoyment, separated from all my soul holds dear, I can never hope to be less wretched than at present. Since the rumour of a war proves false, and I have lost all hopes from my profession, I will to-morrow resign my commission, and, perhaps, endeavour, by change of place, to lose reflection. But, whilst I remain in England, will the gentle Emmeline Clifford permit me to visit her?"

"Certainly," replied Lady Emmeline, in a voice that her emotions of pity for him rendered scarcely audible. Lord Edward observed how much she was affected.

"My sweet friend," said he, taking her hand, "why are these tears? Do they indeed flow in pity for me?"

"Alas!" exclaimed Lady Emmeline, not regarding him, "why am I destined to behold

hold those I most esteem hopelessly wretched."

"Oh!" cried he, with warmth, "you are indeed the friend of Louisa!" And after a pause, he added, "I do not think that you will long be troubled with my visits. A mind ill at ease cannot endure the quiet of home; and I believe in the spring I shall go over to Switzerland. It is six years since I have been there, and when I was, many things past unnoticed, which I should be glad to see again."

"I wish I could go with you," said Lady Emmeline, pleased to hear him speak more composedly than he had done; "I should like to travel through Switzerland, to trace out all the haunts of Rousseau, and to visit those places which he has immortalized."

"There was a time," rejoined Lord Edward, "when I too should have found pleasure in what you describe; but it is long since past: and *les affligeantes Reveries* of my friend Rousseau have ceased to affect me. Yet I have a sort of veneration for his country, as
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the abode of freedom and simple felicity. To behold a happy family I should not regret the fatigue of climbing the Alps, if, on their snowy summits I could meet one man who thought himself blest; I would take up my abode with him, nor once look back with a wish to the peaceful vale."

"Then certainly," said Lady Emmeline, "you should be fond of England."

"As my native country I am. But the contrast that it every moment presents, between the present time and the past, is too wounding to feelings irascible by nature, and rendered more so by affliction."

"Come," said Lady Emmeline, "fortune has smiles in store for us, and these her frowns are meant to brighten them."

She made this little quotation with an air of cheerfulness, which Lord Edward knew the heart too well to believe was real; and the expression of her features, though they wore a smile of pretended hilarity, betrayed only

only the tenderest compassion for woes she could not relieve. Lord Edward replied,

“That her smiles may ever be lavished on you, Emmeline, is my belief, as well as my fervent wish. But, my gentle friend, cease to flatter me with the hope of returning peace. Good night,” he added, in so low a tone, as scarcely to be heard, and hurried away.

Lady Emmeline immediately returned home; and the following morning, as she was sitting alone in her dressing-room, Lord Edward Lumley was announced. He immediately observed, that she appeared unwell, and affectionately taking her hand, he said,

“You are ill, Lady Emmeline; my conversation with you last night was too much for your spirits; and for a heart tremblingly alive as yours appears to be, to feel the afflictions of others.”

“My spirits are rather depressed,” returned Lady Emmeline, “and were so before

I went out last night: but when my cold is better they will grow better also."

"Well, my amiable friend," said Lumley, with a smile, "my melancholy shall no longer distress you, as we shall not meet for a long time."

"Did you not promise, Lord Edward, to visit me, while you remain in England?" inquired she.

"This day," returned he, "will be the last of my stay. When Clifford last night informed me of his marriage with you, and that you were a friend of my Louisa's, I imagined that in your society I should be comparatively happy; for, to you, I could talk of Louisa: but I find, that to do so, only increases my misery, and I will bid you adieu. I had hoped to have introduced my mother to you, but she is at present confined by illness. Will you, Emmeline, condescend to visit her, without the formality of her waiting on you; and will you write to me while I remain

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main abroad? Clifford authorized me to make the request; and I hope that, therefore, you will indulge me."

He appeared afraid to cease speaking while he had any thing to say, lest he should not be able to renew the speech; and now, having received Lady Emmeline's promise to comply with his desire of a correspondence, he kissed her hand, and without having power to pronounce another word, he left the room.

On the following morning Lord Edward set out for France, with design to visit Switzerland, and in less than a month Lady Emmeline accompanied her husband to Ireland, where she was to remain for two years. A few weeks after her arrival in that country, she received the following letter from Louisa.

TO LADY EMMELINE CLIFFORD.

"When last I wrote to my Emmeline I thought myself as much fixed in this place, as are the walls of my convent, since not even death would lead to my passing its gates. Yet,
from

from intelligence received only a week since, I find that I must leave Portugal to revisit my native country. Yes, Emmeline, I shall again behold the shores of Britain, again linger in its fertile scenes, and once more see those friends that endear it to me. Why, why must I not hope to meet my Emmeline? But, alas! conjugal duty will detain her in Ireland till I have left England on my return hither. A few days ago, I received intelligence that my cousin, General Somerset, who died some time since, has left me heiress to his whole property, which once belonged to my family, and if I die without children, it is to descend to the present Earl of Montrose; whose letter to me on the occasion I will transcribe in this place.

“Madam,”

“As the copy of General Somerset’s will, which accompanies this, will inform you of your succession to his fortune, I shall not enter into any discussion of the bequest, on which

I most sincerely and warmly congratulate you, but merely intimate to you, that you should not by any means lose time in coming over to England to take possession of your estate; which, otherwise, may be contested at law by the more distant male relations of his family. Among the number of his kinsmen, I am myself included; but I should value more the honor of being admitted in the number of your friends, than being considered as his heir. That I never may inherit his wealth, is my fervent wish, since I hope to see your Ladyship surrounded by your children; having no doubt that you will be immediately absolved from your vows. One of my principal reasons for now writing to you, is to desire your permission to exert all my interest at the Court of Rome, to procure a dispensation from those religious engagements you have entered into at Lisbon. And now, Madam, permit me to claim your congratulations in return for mine, on my recent marriage

riage with one of the most amiable of women. I should be happy if it were in my power to offer you accommodations in my house on your arrival in England; but my grandmother's present state of health forbids my leaving this place, and your business lies entirely in Kent. Lady Montrose desires me to say, that she hopes soon, in person, to lay claim to your friendship, till when she remains as much yours as your affectionate kinsman, &c.

Aberdeen, April 7.

MONTROSE.

Do I not owe it to this generous young man, my Emmeline, to go over to secure that property, which will eventually be his? I will own to you, that when I first saw Lord Montrose's letter, a tide of joy rushed to my heart, and I involuntarily exclaimed, "Oh! dear Edward, thy constancy will now be rewarded, and my tenderness shall banish the remembrance of thy sufferings."

But those ideas, felicitous as they were, were immediately abandoned, when I recollected

lected the sacredness of my vows, and the inability of man to release me from them. I am not so blind a believer as to imagine that any human being can free me from an oath, made before God, and voluntarily devoting myself to him.

But my resolution was again severely shaken, by a letter I at the same time received from the Duchess of Beaufort, congratulating me on my acquisition of fortune, and herself on the prospect of seeing me.

“When,” she says, “the only one of my children who shews me the least attention, left England, I had no hope of enjoying any thing like felicity, for three years, at the end of which time I shall again embrace my Edward; but in the interim I shall clasp to my bosom my beloved young friend. I shall, for a short time at least, enjoy her society; as I am certain she will not refuse to make my house her home, during her stay in England; and when

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she departs, I shall again look forward with distant hope to the meeting with my son."

This charming woman presses her invitation with much warmth of affectionate kindness, that I cannot resist it. She tells me, that a few days after I receive her letter I may expect to see Mrs. Chedley, (her own maid, the same who attended me hither) whom, with her husband, she will send over to bring me to her.

How kind, how considerate is the Duchess! To decline her offer is impossible; more especially as our Abbess refuses to admit me to visit Eegland, unless I am to be under some respectable protection when there; and I have no friend in London to afford me countenance, except her Grace. Adieu, Emmeline; my next letter will be from England.

LOUISA P.

When Louisa determined to accept the Duchess of Beaufort's invitation, she had not the

the least suspicion of what the views of that Lady were; and the Duchefs too well knew her scrupulous delicacy, to give the slightest hint of what they were.

At the time that the Duke died, and Lord Edward entered into possession of the estate bequeathed him, it was his wish, and that of his mother, that he should share it with his beloved Louisa. Neither of them were ignorant that there were a particular sort of arguments irresistible to the sovereign Pontiff, to induce him to remit any engagements formed with the church; but, in order to be certain what grounds he went on, Lord Edward employed a friend of his (who happened to be no other than Mr. Clifford) to find out from a priest well known to the latter, (who had resided a good deal in Ireland) in the neighbourhood of Dublin, whether there were any hopes of Louisa being absolved from her vows. If there was any one instance, in which Lord Edward thought

highly of any thing serious, it was this ; and and he was so far excusable, as that from his protestant education, and the school of his profession, he had learned to consider many parts of the Roman Catholic religion as extremely absurd ; and though he esteemed a truly pious and virtuous Catholic as much as any one in the world, he would have no sort of scruple of marrying a nun, even without his Holiness's permission, provided her conscience was perfectly at ease regarding the breach of her vows.

The priest to whom Mr. Clifford applied for information concerning the power of the sovereign Pontiff, possessed some shrewdness with much simplicity : totally uninformed of every thing that did not immediately regard his profession, he had a sort of solemn importance in his manner of speaking of that, which persuaded the ignorant that he knew every thing ; while those of more understanding

standing were apt to suspect, from thence, that he knew less than he really did.

One evening that Mr. Clifford had invited the Priest to his house, he contrived to turn the conversation to the subject of Pontifical power, and particularly that regarding his dispensation with religious vows. The man freely declared that it was in the power of the Pope to absolve him from his vow of celibacy.

“And, no doubt, he could do the same, if you were a monk?” said Mr. Clifford.

“I am not so certain of that,” returned the father; “there are many reasons why absolution would be at least very difficult to procure in such a case.”

“Why, my good friend,” rejoined Mr. Clifford, “you surely do not mean to say, that a monk’s sanctity would be superior to your own; and that, therefore, the Pope possesses less power over him.”

“God forbid,” said the father solemnly, “that any person should conceive me defi-

cient in my efforts to acquire the greatest degree of sanctity! And you know, Sir, that according to every man's ability to be virtuous he will be judged. The man to whom one talent only is committed, will not be expected to increase that one to so large an amount, as him to whom ten had been given: If the proportion is the same it is enough."

"Very true, Mr. —," returned Mr. Clifford, who began to be really pleased with his guest: "But still I do not understand why your vows of celibacy should be less sacred than those of a monk."

"I have made no vow of poverty," said the father, unguardedly; for he was a little vain of the sound doctrine he had made use of, and the effect it seemed to have on his auditor. Mr. Clifford, however, did not receive any new information from the answer of his new companion; as he was already well aware that all such favors must be purchased, if not with money, with something else.

"But

"But I do not conceive," resumed Mr. Clifford, "that nuns make any vows of poverty; and I would fain know, if those they do make, could be dispensed with?"

"Much depends upon circumstances;" answered the Priest hesitatingly: For, as the matter had probably never before come under his consideration, and his positive knowledge did not reach so far, with all his importance he could not speak with greater certainty than when he added, "On very particular occasions I know not how far this lenity might prevail: But what is your reason for asking those questions?"

Mr. Clifford did not care to lay open himself, or to lay open his friend's views to this man, who might, or might not, be fit to be trusted: He therefore made no reply to this demand, but said, "You then esteem it an act of grace and indulgence to free a religionist from their vows?"

"You

"You mistake me there, worthy Sir," said the father, "but certainly there is as much lenity and goodness in exempting a person from the fear of committing of a crime, as if you offer them the greatest enjoyment; since, if a person possesses peace of mind, they cannot be very unhappy; while the extravagance of riotous pleasure cannot produce perfect satisfaction, without the consciousness of right."

At least, thought Clifford, this man possesses moral rectitude. He then said, "Suppose a man should be blockhead enough to fix his affections on a woman who happened to be a nun, might he, in that case, ever hope to obtain her?"

"I do not know how that which you mention could happen. But I will suppose it could: It must be either before the woman became a nun, or afterwards. If a man fell in love with a nun, it would be an abominable crime!" said the father.

"It

"It might be an involuntary one," returned Mr. Clifford, "and, as such, not very abominable."

"Pardon me, Sir, I do not think it could be involuntary," said the Priest humbly.

"You are unacquainted with love," said Mr. Clifford, "and are, therefore, ignorant of its uncontrollable power."

"For the very reason, *that I have never felt it*, I know it *is controllable*. Nothing secures me from being guilty of that offence, but a virtuous inclination, and the custom of considering every woman as if she were my daughter. If this love were that involuntary and uncontrollable passion, that persons who have never been accustomed to govern their passions represent it, we should have nothing in this world but mere *falling in love*, (as you call it) with their sisters; which is so far from being the case, that it does not often occur, (comparatively speaking) that men desire to possess their neighbours wives."

"That

“That may easily be accounted for,” said Mr. Clifford, “by the odium fixed to those who do, and the fear of prosecutions at law.”

Clifford had here for once overshot himself; and the father smiled between ridicule and triumph. Clifford resumed.

“But in the other case, regarding a nun, Mr. ——?”

“If she took the vows,” he answered, “notwithstanding his attachment to her, it is probable that she would not join him in endeavouring to dissolve them; and without her consent nothing can be done.”

“But suppose, my good Sir, that a man were to indulge a passion for a nun, in the hope of having her vows remitted?”

“None but a heretic,” interrupted the Priest warmly, as he rose to take his leave, “could form such a design; and to heretics the sovereign Pontiff gives no indulgences; since it is more than probable that if he did, they would laugh at him for his easy kindness.”

In consequence of this conversation, which was repeated to Lumley, his Lordship gave up all hope of procuring Louisa's liberation; and Lord Edward was, at the time she accepted his mother's invitation to her house, entirely ignorant of the event that called her to England, and of the hopes that it might reasonably inspire, and the Duchess thought it best that he should not hear any thing of it for some time.

When Louisa applied to the Lady Abbess of her Convent, for permission to re-visit England, she found that it was not very easy to be obtained. The superior knew perfectly well, that all the friends of the fair nun would use their utmost efforts to procure a dispensation of her vows; and that, thence, the income of her estate would not by any means benefit the community: while, if she still remained in the Convent, and did not chuse to sequester her income for its use, she would probably pay largely for trifling indulgences.

dulgences. The Abbess therefore insisted on Louisa giving a solemn promise to return to her Convent, as soon as her business relative to taking possession of her estate was completed, for which she would only allow three months; saying,

“You cannot be ignorant, that in case any disagreeable circumstance were to arise from my permitting you to go, I should be obliged to answer for it; therefore, if (for my security) you refuse to give me the private promise I demand to return hither, I shall withhold my permission till you obtain an order from the higher powers; the process of procuring which will be tedious: If, on the contrary, you give me your word to come back at the end of three months, or before, if your business can be dispatched, I will give you leave to secularize your dress, and depart on the morrow.”

Louisa gave the desired promise; and, five days afterward, attended by the worthy Mrs. Chedley

Chedley and her husband, she embarked on board the packet, that had already loosened sail to go for England.

With all Louisa's piety and (without being a bigot) she possessed a great deal, she experienced an involuntary sensation of pleasure, as she passed the Convent gates; and a still more lively one when she lost sight of its lofty walls.* Like a bird, [whose leg is encircled with a string so light as not to impede its flying, she fancied herself at liberty; but as, when the person who holds the string, by checking the flight of the little volatile, convinces it that it is not in full freedom, the recollection of her vows, and her promise to the Abbess, would obtrude themselves on the mind of Louisa, and diminish the pleasure she felt, at being able to look around her, and to see no enclosing walls to bound her prospects.

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* This comparison has already been used by Richardson, in his admirable production, *Clarissa Harlowe*.

The next day but one following her departure, from Lisbon, Louisa happened to take up a book, which lay on a shelf, in the great cabin. It chanced to be a volume of the Poems of Lopez de Vega, in the original Spanish.

“That book,” said the Captain, observing she held it in her hand, “was given near eight years ago, by an English gentleman (who took his passage with me from Lisbon) to my then lieutenant; the lad died some time ago, and by some chance or other I got the book: I cannot read it; and as I have a pair of sleeve buttons, as a memorial of poor Mc Intosh, I will give it to the first passenger I get who understands Spanish.”

“I am that one,” said Louisa; “and as the book is rather a scarce one, I shall be much obliged to you for it.”

The Captain declared she would oblige him by accepting it; and Louisa, after thanking him, retired with the volume to her own cabin.

cabin. She then looked out for a particular poem, which she had often read with pleasure : She soon found it, and was as much surprized as pleased to behold the name of E. Lumley written, in the well known hand of Lord Edward, in the margin of the page. With a thousand pleased emotions her eyes dwelt on the letters for some minutes ; her next feeling was one of gratitude to the Captain, for having bestowed such a treasure on her ; and estimating the obligation rather by its peculiar than its intrinsic, or even designed value, she hastened to the trunk, and taking from thence a book of most beautiful maps, (given her when almost a child, by the late General Somerset) and writing the Captain's name in the first leaf, she sent it to him, with her compliments, as a small return for the pleasure he had afforded her, by his present of Lopez de Vega.

The remaining days of the voyage passed quietly away ; and in the usual time Louisa

landed at Falmouth. She immediately wrote to the Duchess of Beaufort, to inform her of her arrival, and had just dispatched her letter, when Mr. Chedley entered the room.

"At what hour," said the old man, "will your Ladyship chuse to start?"

"Whenever you please to order the carriage," was the answer.

"Her Grace will be very impatient till she sees your Ladyship," Chedley resumed.

"Let us then set out early," said Louisa.

"But her Grace desired me not to allow your Ladyship to fatigue yourself by hurrying forward."

"Then, friend," said Louisa, with a smile, "I think the only way there is of our obeying your Lady, yet gratifying your and my own desire is, that I should command you to order the carriage, that we may go the first stage this evening."

Louisa spoke to one who was not backward in hastening the preparations for their departure ;

departure; and with such alacrity did the old man set about them, that in less than an hour Louisa and Mrs. Chedley were in the chaise, and on their way to London.

It was one of those fine evenings, not very common in the beginning of May, that Louisa began her journey: the sun shone with the utmost brilliancy, gilding the steep crags that rose upon all sides; and the wild heaths that have at any other season of the year a barren and uncomfortable appearance, now that the tops of the plants were covered with the tender shoots of spring, possessed a lively verdure, almost unequalled by the fresh grafs that overspread the plains of Devonshire; while, in some places, the pale purple tint of the heath blossoms gave a luxuriance to the colouring of the landscape, that rendered it peculiarly pleasing to a person, who had long been accustomed to behold only the narrow limits of a garden, or the scenery of the shores of Tagus, speckled with stately

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edifices,

edifices, and highly cultivated: the native simplicity of the country through which Louisa now travelled, and the almost boundless view of hills rising behind hills, and the distant sea forming a scarcely perceptible horizon, must, (even from its novelty) be charming. But Louisa was a lover of nature, and the first impression she had received of a country she was attached to, had been in the wild regions of the Highlands of Scotland.

In a shorter time than a less impatient traveller would have performed the journey, Louisa arrived in London, and on stopping at the house of the Duchess of Beaufort; she was in a moment conveyed to the affectionate bosom of her truly respectable friend.

To describe the mingled sensations of delight and pain (caused by intrusive remembrance) which both felt at meeting, would be impossible; but when they had a little subsided, each could observe the change which time had made in the other. Louisa saw that

the Duchess was wasted almost to a shadow, and that seven years had had more effect in altering her appearance, than twenty might reasonably be expected to have: the langour of her once bright eyes, and of her now withered form, proclaimed that her constitution was entirely broken; and that, at an age when many women are only in their prime, she was sinking into the grave, from nature being entirely exhausted: she smiled, however, upon Louisa, as she said,

“Your arrival, my invaluable young friend, was too fortunate a circumstance to arise on a day when I have received more pleasure than I have done for many months. I shall grow fond of this world in time, if I enjoy many such days as this; which first brought me intelligence that my son Edward is, in some measure, recovering in his health, and then presented me with my Louisa.”

Louisa could only look her gratitude, both for the information and the compliment, and

soon afterwards (as she declined supping and was much fatigued) the Duchess attended her to her apartment. It was that in which she had slept previous to her leaving England; and the reflections that crowded on her mind when the Duchess, immediately departing, left her alone, were of a nature to preclude, for that night at least, the repose she so much stood in need of.

Louisa had been near a month in London, and her business was in great forwardness, when one morning, as she was sitting at breakfast with the Duchess, the latter received some letters, which she immediately opened. As she read them, frequent sighs swelled her breast, and, at length, laying down the sheet she was perusing on the table, she burst into tears. Louisa tenderly enquired the cause of her sorrow.

“Ah! Louisa,” said the Duchess, in a voice that betrayed the anguish of her heart, “your gentle and susceptible nature should
not

not be shocked by the knowledge of my woes; they are such as you cannot relieve, and your pity would only distress yourself, without benefiting me."

"Think not of my sufferings, Madam," said Louisa, "but if to speak of your own can alleviate them do so; and inform me whence originates this sorrow."

"Alas! it originates in my children! — When it pleased the Almighty to give me a numerous family, I fondly hoped that I should have had so many comforts in my declining years. But I have sighed over the graves of some, and those who remain occasion me nothing but affliction. My eldest child, my dear, my lovely Caroline, compelled by an austere and unrelenting father, to a marriage with a hoary monster, survived the sacrifice but a few months: torn from a man she loved, and given to a wealthy tyrant, her mild and gentle nature, sunk under her sufferings, and I wept over her corpse. My second daugh-

ter, Olivia, determined not to be sacrificed like her sister, took the most effectual means to prevent it, by marrying, to please herself, a man unworthy of her, with whom she now lives miserably in Germany. My sweet Frances, my best beloved, I was doomed to watch, for three tedious years, declining by slow degrees; and, at length, to see her expire in a consumption. Never, never, Louisa, was there a mother more fondly attached to a child, than I was to her; and no child ever desired more of a parent. The present Duke of Beaufort is another bitter source of misery to me: with all the faults of his father, he wants his virtues: he has given his hand to a woman of mean birth, without one single quality to render her estimable; if she is chaste it is the utmost, for she pursues pleasure in all its dangerous forms, accompanied by my deluded and headstrong Cecilia, rioting in every species of extravagance, which her husband dare not check; though it is tardily,
and

and with avowed reluctance, that he pays me my trifling jointure. James is a gamester, a drinker, and a Jockey! And William Harcourt, with amiable dispositions, and no deficiency of sense, prefers following the steps of James, to imitating Edward; because, he says, he sees Edward's virtue makes him miserable. Of Harcourt's reformation I still cherish hopes; but I can scarcely think I shall ever see Edward restored to that peace of mind, and lively gaiety that he once possessed, and I can never be any thing but miserable."

When the Duchess had a little recovered her composure, she took up a letter which had lain unperceived on the table, being concealed by the covers of the others. Louisa saw that it had a foreign post mark; and the writing on the superscription (though scarcely legible) she knew to be that of Lord Edward Lumley. The Duchess wept as she

read it, and then gave it to Louisa. It contained only these lines.

“When I wrote last, I thought that my health was about to be restored; but on that very day, I was seized with a violent illness, which has reduced me to a state of such extreme weakness, that even writing these few words is an arduous task. My physician informs me, that nothing can so soon re-establish my health, as returning to the influence of my native air. I shall, therefore, set out for England to-morrow, and hope, by easy stages, to reach your house even sooner than you may expect me. Let me not in the least disturb any arrangement you have made; but receive me as you have ever done your

Geneva, June 2.

E. LUMLEY.”

Louisa, when she had perused it, folded up the letter, examined the seal, and seemed studying what to say; but all the resolution she had been able to muster gave way, when the Duchess taking her hand, and looking in
her

her face with the most mournful earnestness, she perceived the tears falling fast over her pale cheeks. Louisa wept also, and was unable to pronounce a word; she directly conceived the meaning of the Duchess's supplicating looks, and said,

“No, Madam: if prudence and propriety are not found to forbid my remaining with you, I will not abandon you. Lord Edward will see me with such feelings as he ought, and there will be no necessity for my leaving your protection, at a time when my services and my soothings may be of use to you.”

The Duchess embraced her young friend, while her bosom throbbed with numberless undescribable emotions, amongst which gratitude was the first; but hope soon displaced it, and she was ready to exclaim,

“Then shall my Edward be blest! — If you consent to see him, it is impossible you can resist his wishes.”

A few days after this Louisa received the following billet.

"If hope does not deceive me, friendship has not yet fled to heaven; and Lady Louisa Percy still remembers the promise she made me, to think of me with some little regard."

"Have years obliterated this promise, Madam, from your memory? or, may I believe that you will not disappoint me, by a refusal to see me, to permit me to assure you I still remain the most sincere of your friends,

HALLIFAX."

With a satisfaction she did not wish to restrain, Louisa read this billet; and returned the following answer.

"The remembrance that the Marquis of Hallifax thought it worth his while to exact the promise of which he reminds me, gives rise to ideas too flattering for me to forego. I have never been unmindful of it, and shall be proud to assure the Marquis, in person, of my friendship, if he will call at the Duchess
of

of Beaufort's house, to-morrow evening, and inquire for

LOUISA PERCY."

When Louisa had sent away her note, she inquired of the Duchess, what was the present situation of the Marquis of Halifax; and learned, that about four years before, he had married a very amiable young lady, sister to the Earl of Montrose, who had died in child-bed of her first child, about twelve months after her marriage: the infant was dead born, so that the Marquis was still unincumbered with a family. He had been much attached to the Marchioness, and, since her death, he had led a wandering sort of life, never residing above a month in any one place, when in England; and two years he had spent in Sweden, from whence he was not long returned.

The Marquis did not fail to attend Louisa's appointment, and at six o'clock in the evening he met her in the drawing-room of the Duchess of Beaufort.

She

She received him with a generous warmth of friendship which he scarcely expected ; but with which he was quite enraptured. As for his behaviour to her, it was that of an affectionate brother, restrained by the timid respect which ever accompanies even the recollection of a former attachment. Louisa endeavoured to make him forget that such had ever existed, while she talked to him of the time that had elapsed since their last meeting, and, by degrees, drew him into giving her and the Duchess an account of what he had seen in Sweden. He was just relating to them the occurrences of the eventful morning of the 19th of August, 1772, when he happened to be in Stockholm, when the party were disturbed by a little bustle, that arose at the head of the stairs, and the next moment Lord Edward, supported by old Chedley, entered the room.

He quickened his pace as he approached the Duchess ; who, every thing but fainting, was

was unable to rise from her seat ; but the embrace of her son seemed to restore her faculties, and the power of shedding tears, caused by joy for his return, and sorrow for the manner of it, and his wasted appearance. Louisa now proved herself superior to all the weakness of her sex ; for without any visible sign of extraordinary emotion, she gave her hand to Lord Edward, and congratulated his return, as if he had been only an old friend. The Marquis was surprised at her composure, and instead of re-seating himself, said to her, in a low voice, “ The present time is not one when my presence can be agreeable, and I will not take leave of you now, because, when I do, I shall chuse to take up the whole of your attention : so I say simply, good night.”

He kissed her hand as he pronounced those words, and bowing to the Duchess and her son, left the room, followed by Louisa, who did not wish to be present at their first conversation.

When

When left alone with his mother, Lord Edward was ashamed to express surprise or curiosity as to the cause of the visit of the Marquis of Halifax to Louisa, (for he well knew the Duchess was not acquainted with him) but he certainly did not experience the most agreeable sensations, and was thoughtful, silent, and melancholy, during the short time that intervened before he retired to his chamber, excusing himself on the plea of illness and fatigue. The true occasion of the indisposition of Lord Edward, though he did not own it to the Duchess (who, however suspected it) was the agitation caused in his mind, by the receipt of his mother's letter, informing him of Louisa being in England, and the reasonable possibility of the church yet permitting their union.

The letter the Duchess never thought it proper to inform Louisa she had written, and had Louisa been in a state of mind to note (comparatively) trivial occurrences, she would

would probably have observed it to be something singular that his Lordship betrayed no token of surprise on seeing her (as she thought) so unexpectedly. But as she felt conscious of having made a most wonderful effort herself in meeting him with composure, when she did reflect on this circumstance, she attributed to him a similar, if not a superior exertion of heroism.

At Breakfast the next morning Lord Edward, who had rested ill, did not appear; and the moment it was over, as Louisa had some business to transact with her agent, the Duchess hastened to the apartment of her son: she found him ill and languid indeed, but, from the expression of his countenance, she thought his mind more at ease than it had been the preceding evening. After a little previous conversation, he said to the Duchess,

“I know, my dear Madam, that I am weak if I am forbidden to call Louisa mine; and

and wrong if she permits me to indulge the hope you have given me, in being uneasy at the Marquis of Hallifax's visit last night ; but I request you will inform me in what light she considered him, when she allowed him to come ? I do not ask this question from an impertinent curiosity, but from a desire to know how to conduct myself. If she is only to be absolved from her vows, that the increase of wealth and consequence her estate affords may be thrown into a Catholic family, I should wish to know it ; that I may at least secure her friendship, by seeming to have forgot my love."

"Assure yourself," said the Duchess, "that Louisa professes, and I am certain feels nothing more for the Marquis than esteem and good will."

"But does she honor me with a softer sentiment?" inquired Lord Edward, half mournfully.

"My dear son," she replied, "that is a subject

subject on which I have never dared to touch: I knew that if I did, Louisa would be ingenuous; and I know also, that I could not conceal my knowledge of her sentiments from you. But I considered that maternal affection would be no excuse for my betraying the secret thoughts of my friends. From her, then, you must learn, how highly you stand in her estimation."

While the Duchess was speaking, Lord Edward's man brought her a slip of paper, on which was written, in Louisa's hand,

"The Marquis of Halifax has written to tell me, he is going to leave town for a few days; and to request permission to call on me at his return: Will it be agreeable to you that he should do so?"

As the servant left the room the moment he had delivered his business, the Duchess gave the note to Lord Edward, saying,

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"Does

“Does this look like attachment to the Marquis?”

Lord Edward perused the lines in silence, and sighed as he gave them back to his mother; who immediately went, in person, to reproach Louisa for having thought it necessary to require her permission to receive any visitors she pleased. The Marquis accordingly received as favourable an answer as he could wish, and that day (and several succeeding ones) was spent tranquilly at least, if not happily, by the Duchess, her son, and Louisa.

One morning, however, a fortnight after the arrival of Lord Edward, Louisa happened to be left alone with him after breakfast, and (as was her custom when this occurred) she was going to leave the room, when his Lordship said, “Is Lady Louisa timid, or unkind, when she takes such precautions to prevent my speaking to her, except in the presence of my mother?”

“Neither, my Lord: For the former, I
conclude,

conclude, I have no reason; and to the latter I have no inclination."

"Why then, Madam, do you fly me?"

"The inquiry, my Lord, proves, it is right so to do," replied Louisa.

"You then perceive that I wish for a private conference?"

"I cannot avoid perceiving it, my Lord: If it were not so, your Lordship would permit me to leave the room, unnoticed, when I pleased."

"How long, Louisa," inquired Lumley, with assumed calmness, "is it since you have adopted the cold and ceremonious term, my Lord, for him who was once your Edward?"

"Eight years since," Louisa replied, "I abjured all connexions, except friendly ones: yet, if you please to be considered in the fraternal character, the formality you complain of shall no longer offend you. I am, and will be to you, sister Louisa."

"No, Louisa, that title must be yours no

longer," said Lord Edward gravely, with an air of seriousness, that was evidently put on to conceal the excess of his emotion, as he added, "For this once you must hear me. There was a time when you, without scruple, confessed, not only that I was dear to you, but that it was your wish to spend your life with me. Blest, most truly blest, should I have been, to put your affections to the proof; had not the stern prejudices of both our fathers forbid our union: your's loved you—mine only regarded me as I might increase his consequence, by giving him a Countess for his daughter. To my own father I looked on myself as absolved from all duty, as he had violated his to me, by endeavouring to make me miserable; and, at the death of Lord Montrose, in spite of fortune, I would have claimed and made you mine: my commission would have been sufficient to support us. My father would not deprive me of it so long as I performed my duty as an officer; and

and had I died before you, or left any children, my generous country and my benevolent King would have secured the family of a faithful servant from want. But, Louisa, the difference of religion would have afforded a plea to my father to disunite us, which he might easily have enforced. I then consented to yield you up to a more fortunate destiny; and I think that I could have seen you the wife of another. I saw you devote yourself to heaven with all the agony of disappointed hope; but I dared not step forward to prevent it. Once, indeed, during the awful ceremony, I had nearly done so. I saw the priest advance to wrap you in the sable veil, that was to divide you from me for ever; I thought I saw you shrink back, and I was on the point of exclaiming, that you were my wife, by a thousand vows of fidelity, but utterance was denied me, and ere I recovered the power of speech, you meekly bowed your head, you received the veil, and all hope was lost."

“ Good God ! ” cried Louisa, now first recovering the power of speech, of which surprise and bitter recollection had bereft her, “ whither does all this tend ? ”

“ Be patient, Louisa, for a few minutes, the remaining part of my history will not detain you long. ”

“ When the death of my father, and my accession to wealth far beyond my wishes, would, in other circumstances, have placed me within the reach of happiness, I took the best means to be informed whether it was possible that you might be freed from your vows ; but, from a minister of your faith, I found that I, as a Protestant, must not appear in it, and that, indeed, there was no hope of your liberation. A friendship I at this time formed with your cousin, Lord Montrose, opened to me farther information. He lamented that he was not of age when you took the fatal step, of entering the convent, and told me that it was next to impossible
for

for you to regain your freedom, unless some unforeseen event was to afford you an opportunity of coming to England, since that was the only place from whence you could treat with the church. This unforeseen event has taken place ; and Lord Montrose, in a letter I yesterday received, informed me, that he has been endeavouring to ascertain the practicability of procuring your release, and has very little doubt, that if the proper steps are taken, you will be permitted to marry."

"And can you conceive it possible, that I shall ever do so?" inquired Louisa, with calm dignity.

"I do, Louisa, I do : I cannot believe you capable of inconstancy ; and my own lovely, tender Louisa, would wish to make all within the sphere she moves as happy as possible."

"My Lord, you have mistaken my character," returned Louisa firmly, "I hope I never yet gave you just cause to imagine, that I would break through a vow to promote

my own temporary happiness. For, believe me, Edward, all the satisfaction you could experience from a union with a woman, to whom I never doubted your attachment, could not equal the transport with which I should receive the assurance, that I should spend the remainder of my life with one, whose tenderness, honor, and fidelity, has been proved, as your's has been."

"Noble, generous Louisa!" exclaimed Lord Edward, "you have given me another plea whereon to urge my proposal: My efforts will not now be selfish, since they will be to promote your happiness, as well as my own: and hear my declaration, as I have heard yours. Much as I doat on you, and tedious as have been my sufferings for your sake, could you, at this moment say, with truth, 'Lumley, I should be happier in my Convent!' yet were willing, for my felicity, to consent to a marriage with me, I would spurn the idea, though my life should pay the price
of

of my self-denial. But why talk of yielding up my life? Rather should I say, nay swear to you, that I would in preference to taking advantage of your generosity, consent to spend a long life separated from you, while the keen torment of my feelings should to the end be undiminished."

"For both our sakes, then," continued Edward fervently, "let me conjure you to consent to Lord Montrose applying for absolution from your vows."

"Let me ask you," said Louisa solemnly, "do you think that such an absolution would acquit me of a crime, in violating a vow I have made."

"I do, Louisa. Had you made a vow to your father, and had he rendered it void, it would have been so. Your present engagements were formed with the church, and the church has power to dissolve them."

"Were it for any good or necessary purpose," returned she, "perhaps it might; but
when

when the desire of being freed from them arises from those very passions I have vowed to banish from my heart, how shall I hope for absolution? But, Edward, I will be more candid with you. I do not believe it is in the power of man to remit those vows made to God."

Lord Edward looked astonished; the seriousness of the subject did not permit his thoughts to dwell on any thing but itself, and he said, "Louisa, you are no Catholic! This is not the declaration of me."

"I hope I possess reason and charity," she replied, "and such tenets of the religion, I profess, as depart from both, I learned to condemn, when I found in heretics every virtue that could render them worthy of heaven. If memory is left us in a future state, my happiness would be incomplete, unless shared with those I love; and it is reasonable to suppose, that a mere minister of God should have power to dissolve vows, witnessed and accepted

cepted by God himself. When I devoted myself to his worship, I called on him to behold and ratify my oath, and nothing can excuse my breaking it; therefore, Edward, seek not, Oh! seek not to make me guilty. My reason and my heart are weak, they may betray me; but do not you, whom I have loved and trusted, lead me to destruction!"

As Louisa pronounced this affecting petition, she clasped her hands in an attitude of supplication, and the deep sobs that seemed to swell her heart almost to bursting, totally overcame Lord Edward. He threw himself on his knees before her, exclaiming, even with tears,

"Glorious, matchless Louisa, you shall be obeyed. Oh! believe me not so base, as that, to make my whole future life one scene of bliss, I would expose you to feeling one sting of conscience. No, thou perfect angel, never from this moment shall you hear of my ill-fated love. I will look up to you as a superior

rior being, who has deigned to feel an interest in my fate, and ——”

“No, Edward,” interrupted Louisa, the elevation of her soul beaming in her eyes, and seeming to restore her from the wreck of what she had been, to all her former spirit and beauty, “Consider me as your sister; fancy that I am the one you most loved, risen from the grave, and then I shall glory in your affection.”

At that moment the Duchess entered the room, and Louisa throwing her arms round her neck, wept in silence, with her head reclined on her shoulder for a few minutes; but seeming suddenly to recollect herself, she hurried to her own apartment.

It was some time before Lord Edward was able to give his mother an account of his conversation with Louisa; but when he did so, the Duchess was at once convinced that he had no further to hope. What her feelings were when she declared this sad certainty, may

may be conceived, but not described,

“Alas!” said she, in an accent of the bitterest anguish, “now, now do I feel the fullness of my punishment for my breach of duty to my father, in my marriage with yours. His resentment was the cause of the sacrifice of my poor Caroline. It lessened my consequence in the eyes of five of my children, and prevented my efforts to save them from guilt and misery—and it has blasted all the hopes of my Edward and his Louisa. It was not enough to atone for my error, that I should endure thirty years of misery and corroding reflection, but I must behold those I most love, wretched. — That is the severest sting of all.”

Lord Edward tried successfully to sooth the perturbed emotions of his revered parent; but to restore her mind to peace was impossible. She said, and she said truly, that she had no hope but in the grave: To that place of repose she seemed fast hastening, and every
day

day that passed, after this memorable one, appeared to produce some new sign of decay; but the Duchess resembled the tender and flexible reed, which the tempest has often pressed to the earth, and the rain-swollen rivulet, rising midway on its stem, threatened to tear it from its root, to carry it with its rapid tide away; but when the tempest ceases it again rises, and, though ever drooping, is in no danger of breaking. So this fresh tide of sorrow, though it almost overwhelmed, did not destroy her.

From this day, too, Louisa seemed to forget that Lord Edward had ever been any other than a brother to her, and always treated him as such. She had no doubt of his honorable manly firmness, and she wished to shew him that she did not distrust his sense of propriety.

The expiration of her three months of liberty was now fast advancing, and Louisa began to think seriously of preparing for her

return to her Convent, when, one day, a week before she intended to begin her journey, she consented (accompanied by the Duchess and Lord Edward) to visit a beautiful house and demesne, which was part of the property left her by General Somerset. She had been there before for about an hour, but they were to spend the whole day there; and as it was eighteen miles from London, they set out early. The house was situated in an extensive park, and from its site commanded a most beautiful view of the Thames, with the busy ever moving scene on its bosom and the varied prospect of the opposite shores. The pleasure-grounds were in elegant order, and almost formed a circle, which bounded the park on all sides.

The gardener (for Louisa was unacquainted with the place) conducted the party all over the gardens, and to several ornamental edifices, erected in the best chosen situations, and in exquisite taste. When they thought
they

they had already seen every thing worthy observation, the gardener said to Louisa, "But my Lady has not yet seen the watch tower."

"The watch tower, Andrew; whereabouts is that?" inquired Louisa.

"Near half a mile off, my Lady, on the rock, to the east of the trout-stream."

"I fear," said Louisa to the Duchess, "you will not be able to walk so far."

"Oh!" cried honest Andrew, "her Ladyship will not have far to walk, and may have fine rest, if she does not please to mount the rock; for there is a little place at the bottom of it where I keep all sorts of fishing tackle, and where my Lady Duchess may divert herself with a rod and line."

The Duchess said she would walk to this place, at least, and they accordingly set out. The path lay along the borders of a trout-stream, which was in some parts broad and smooth, the green turf sloping gently to the water's edge, and frequently decorated with
large

large willow and Accasia trees. Sometimes, where it was confined by steep rocky boundaries, dashing and foaming over the little falls that varied its bed, and threatened to tear away the crooked branches of the oaks that stretched across it.

At length they came to the building the gardener had spoken of, as a resting-place for the Duchess. It was in the form of a small cottage, with only a few feet of rustic garden, between it and the stream, which at this place rather resembled a pool than a brook. The thatched roof was shaded at one end by a flowering alder-tree, which hanging over the water, at every breeze covered its surface with its thick falling blossoms. Three tall poplars grew at the extremity of the little garden, and several trees of the light and (nightly) fragrant Acacia, were planted along the verge of the stream, which reflected the beautiful white flowers, that half conceal themselves among the foliage, if not looked at

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from

from beneath. Almost close to the cottage began the ascent of the craggy rock, or rather a mass of rocks and scarcely vegetation, on the summit of which stood the watch tower.

Arrived at the cottage, the Duchess declared her intention of remaining there till the rest of the party returned from the tower; Louisa objected to ascending the cliff without her, but her grace insisted so strongly on her doing so, that she was at last obliged to begin the ascent, accompanied by Lord Edward, and honest Andrew. The difficulty in reaching the summit of the rock was not trifling, but the view from it amply compensated for the fatigue. The principal room in the tower had two windows, one commanding an extensive prospect of hill and dale, finely planted and improved, with the cottage and its peaceful environs close below: the other looked down on the stream, and on a rock that appeared to have split to about the depth of
thirty

thirty feet, to form a channel for it; it inclined outwards a little on each side, shaded by brush-wood, and across the chasm was erected one of those rustic bridges, common in many parts of England, particularly Devonshire, where they are called clams: the path down to the bridge was rugged, and even steeper than that from the cottage; and seemed to lead into a small chesnut-wood, on the left.

When Louisa and Lord Edward were sufficiently gratified with contemplating the prospect, they examined the edifice itself. It was in a circular form, and its construction was such that they would scarcely have entertained a doubt of its having, in former ages, answered the purpose of a watch tower, had not honest Andrew taken infinite pains to assure them, that for all the walls were so rough, and so ivy grown, it was not above five years since he had seen every stone of them laid, with his own eyes.

The tower had no other furniture but a few of those rustic stools, described by Cowper, where he says,

“On such a stool immortal Alfred sat,

“And sway’d the sceptre of his infant realms.”

The walls were coated with straw, raised in a sort of rude pannels; and in most of the compartments were sketches, in red and black chalk, executed with the boldest and most masterly expression of men, in the habits of Roman soldiers, employed in several sports; and some few of the figures seemed to have all the formality of military discipline. The name of George Somerset, inserted in some part of each drawing, proved they had been done by the late General; and Lord Edward remarked, that the idea was borrowed from the supposed guard-room at Pompeia. The observations that his Lordship was drawn in to make on that wonderful city, were interrupted by the clamorous complaints of the gardener, who was execrating a large goat that

that had taken a fancy to browse on the tender shoots of some exotic plants, which grew under the window of the watch-tower. In vain were the shouts of Andrew to chase him from the trees; he shook his long flowing beard, and continued his destructive employment. The poor gardener was now compelled to descend the tower, and go round to force him from the enjoyment of his repast; but the bold animal, when he threatened it with a stick, looked, for a moment, with seeming arch defiance in his face, and then, bounding down the cliffs, mounted the bridge, where it stood stamping, and appearing to display its horns, as a formidable means of defence, in case of attack.

Louisa was for some time amused with its tricks; and then leaving it and Andrew to settle their dispute how they pleased, she went to the other window. She observed the Duchess sitting on a sod-seat, at the door of the cottage; and from the perfect simplicity of

her dress she might easily (at that distance) be mistaken for its proper inhabitant; her plain brown lutestring was not to be distinguished from a camblet, and her simple and becoming black hood, was not known to be of the finest lace.

Louisa remarked to Lord Edward, who stood beside her, what an interesting figure his mother appeared; and he said, "Most truly so, indeed! But can you, Louisa, who are so gentle, and so benevolent, seriously think of depriving her (by your departure for Portugal) of that sweet serenity she at present seems to enjoy?"

"You know all my feelings on that subject, my friend," said Louisa, "should not, therefore, doubt, or be surprised, at my resolution to leave England in a week."

"No, my more than sister!" returned Lord Edward, without any apparent or extraordinary emotion, "I will yet hope that you will not yet abandon her. I have given
up

up every idea of your ever marrying, and with your notions regarding the guilt that would attend it, I cannot even wish you to do so: neither will I say, I should think it no impropriety for you to live in the same house, or even in an intimacy with me, for any length of time. But I wish you to reside with my mother, she loves you, I think, as tenderly as she did my poor Frances, and you could not be unhappy with her. As for me, I am ready to become an exile to promote her felicity! I will embark in the next packet for the East Indies, there to remain for the rest of my days; or for such a number of years, that my returning to live in the same kingdom with you cannot give rise to any thing disagreeable."

"But how," cried Louisa, charmed and touched by this disinterestedness, though it was no more than she would have expected from Lord Edward: "But how (could I even think of accepting your generous offer)

would that promote the felicity of my revered friend? Could my residing with her (think you) console her for the loss of her son? — Alas! no.”

“Yes, Louisa, it would,” replied Lord Edward; adding, “there are a thousand little arts of consolatory tenderness, in the power of a woman to perform, of which men are incapable. The feelings of women are more congenial to softness; their offices of kindness more soothing to the wounded soul: besides, I should be more happy to know, that my Louisa was the sweet supporter of my beloved mother: and she, in the certainty that I was so, would enjoy a greater share of content. For this reason, then, let me entreat you, as the last and only favour you can grant me, that you will consent to cheer, by your presence, the remaining years of my mother’s life.”

“I am sorry, Edward,” replied Louisa, with difficulty restraining her tears, “that
even

even in this one instance I cannot oblige you. Believe me, that, if it was in my power, I would gladly remain in England; and that too, without permitting you to become an exile for my sake. But I have given my solemn promise to our Lady Abbess, to return to my Convent; and let the consequence be what it may, my engagement shall be sacred."

As she spoke Andrew returned to the bower.

"There!" cried he, "there is that cursed jockey that my Master would have, running about the rocks here, has torn all the trees to pieces, and that fine beard of his, that the General used to admire so much, if it was sold, (aye, or his whole carcase into the bargain) it would never pay for the damage he has done. Pray, my lady, allow me to have the knave killed, or we shall never see the end of his mischievous tricks."

At any other time perhaps Louisa would have been amused by the vociferous indignation

tion of the gardener, but now she could only say, "No, no, Andrew, I will not have him injured;" and immediately began to descend the narrow path to the cottage."

When she joined the Duchefs, she found her talking to a very pretty young woman, who held in her arms a lovely infant, apparently only a few weeks old. Louisa had always been extremely fond of children; and now fitting down on a seat at the cottage door, she took this one in her lap. She had been playing with it for some time, while Lord Edward had been looking at her, with sensations difficult to describe; afraid that the mother of the baby would discover them in his looks, he endeavoured to conceal them, by stooping to kiss the infant. As he did so, a large locket, or picture, slipped from within his waistcoat, and appeared hanging to a slight gold chain. The glitter attracted the eyes of the child, and catching the brilliant object in its hand, it (as is common with children at
that

that early age) directly conveyed it to its mouth. Louisa disengaged it from the hand of the little girl, and, in doing so, perceived that it was that very likeness of herself which she had given to the Duchess. Lord Edward seemed distressed at the incident, and she therefore pretended not to notice it; but restoring the baby to its mother, she inquired of her Grace, if she was ready to return to the house: They did so, and having spent the remainder of the day very agreeably, they returned in the evening to London.

To Lord Edward, to his mother, and, even to her fair guest, the hours seemed to fly, with unusual-swiftness, during the few remaining days of Louisa's purposed stay in England. Two evenings before she was to depart, however, she was surprised to receive a message from the Earl of Montrose, who (the servant said) was in a carriage at the street-door, desiring to be permitted to introduce Lady Montrose to her.

Lord Edward directly ran down stairs, to welcome his friend, and to invite him and his Lady up. He immediately returned, conducting them, and presented both, first to Louisa, and then to the Ducheſs. When the former beheld the young Counteſs, ſhe thought ſhe had never ſeen a more lovely and intereſting woman; and even Lord Edward and his mother felt that they had never ſeen but one who ſurpaſſed her in elegance and beauty, that one was Louiſa Percy; and faded as were now her charms, the latter ſtill preſerved her ſuperiority.

Louiſa inquired of Lord Montroſe for his grandmother.

“Her health is ſtill precarious,” he replied, “but when ſhe found that your Ladyſhip would not be prevailed on to prolong your ſtay in England, ſhe acceded to Julia’s wiſhes and mine, that we ſhould leave her, in order to have the honor of attending you to Liſbon.”

It

It was in vain that Louisa objected to their taking so much trouble on her account; Lord Montrose was determined: and when the gentle Julia, taking her hand, said, with the sweetest look and accent,

“Your compliance with our plan of attending you will give me the most heart-felt satisfaction, since it will afford me an opportunity of laying claim to your friendship!”

She could no longer resist; and only five days later than she had at first proposed her departure took place.

It would be in vain to attempt to describe the feelings which agitated the minds of the Duchess of Beaufort and Edward Lumley, as they beheld Louisa get into the coach, which was to convey her to Falmouth.

There are some connexions of a nature too acutely painful for an adequate idea to be given of them to those who have never felt such; and to those who have, the attempts would be needless.

Lord

Lord Edward could not now, as he had done on a former occasion, secretly attend Louisa, even to the chapel of her convent; and when she mounted the step of Lord Montrose's coach, he felt nearly as much as at the moment when she received the black veil.

During the journey, and the voyage, Louisa never lost sight of her usual dignified composure, in the smallest degree; and in a very few days she became really attached to her cousins, particularly the Countess. The affection that soon united those amiable women was, perhaps in a great measure owing to their mutual attachment to Lady Emmeline Clifford; and in speaking of her, in dwelling on her praises, the sensations of both were so perfectly similar, that they entirely forgot that their first meeting had taken place only a few days before.

In due time they all arrived in Lisbon, and the morning after they reached that city,

Louisa

Louisa, accompanied by the amiable Julia, took the way to the English Convent.

As soon as it was known that she was returned all the inhabitants of the house flocked to the parlour to receive and welcome her.

"You are come, my sister," said one of the senior nuns, as she embrace her, "to share our grief for the death of our venerable mother, and to supply her place."

"Yes, yes," cried the several of the religious at once, "sister Louisa must become our mother: No other is worthy to govern us, but the glorious Louisa, who has so nobly resisted all the temptations of the world, and has returned to edify our society."

Louisa felt grateful; but she experienced no commotions of pride in hearing those exclamations: she thanked the good sisters more by looks than words, and determined steadily to decline the intended honor.

She now learned, that the late Abbess had been buried two days before, but that the
election

election of a new superior had been delayed till her arrival from England, that she might give her vote ; or rather, (as it appeared) that they might appoint her to the sovereignty of the little community.

Suffice it to say, that Louisa's rejection of the office of Abbess was of no avail ; she was kindly forced to accept the dignity. And so much had her conduct endeared her to the society, that never was there a superior who enjoyed such absolute dominion over the conduct and affection of the nuns.

Lord and Lady Montrose remained a month at Lisbon (during which time his Lordship heard that his friend, Edward Lumley, had engaged in the service of the Empress of Russia, then at war with the Turks) and afterwards set out to make the tour of Portugal and Spain.

After visiting most places worthy of observation in those Kingdoms, they, at the end of three months returned to Lisbon. It was rather

rather sooner than they had at first intended; but the change in their measures was occasioned by Lord Montrose receiving an account of Lord Edward Lumley being killed at the siege of —

Desirous of softening as much as possible the cruel anguish this must inflict on the heart of Louisa, Julia entreated her Lord to hasten to Lisbon; and she readily consented to oblige her. When they arrived at the English convent, they found that Louisa had been informed of the fatal event they came to impart to her. One of the nuns who came to receive Lady Montrose, said, that the Abbess had, ten days before, received letters both from England and Russia, since which time she had appeared in the deepest affliction, though she still performed her customary duties.

But the first meeting of Julia and her friend were best described, by an extract from a

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letter

letter written by the former to Lady Emmeline Clifford.

“As soon as I was admitted into the Abbess’s parlour, and Louisa appeared, I was certain that what the nun had conjectured was but too true, and she already knew what I came to impart to her. She did not fly to meet me with the impatient eagerness of a long absent friend; but walked sedately up to me, and took my hand in silence. The apparent coldness of her manner, would have wounded my self-love, had not the expression of anguish her lovely countenance wore excited my tenderest commiseration.”

‘Where is your husband, Julia?’ said she; adding, “he was a witness of the last great ceremony that took place within those walls, and he should also behold that, which in a few days will be performed.’

I did not directly understand her, and indeed thought but little of the singularity of the speech; so much was I affected by the
evident

evident abstraction of her ideas, till she continued,

‘It is now no violation of the tenderest friendship to wish to die. Lumley no longer lives, to have his sad existence embittered by my death. He expects me in a better world, and I hasten to rejoin him.’

‘To you, Julia,’ she added, after a pause of considerable length, “I must confide the care of writing to the few friends I have left. The duty of making my will is indispensable; in that they will find that I do not forget them; but I cannot reconcile myself to the idea of bidding them a last farewell. The few hours of life that remain to me, must be devoted to preparation for death; and that will plead my excuse for declining to see Lord Montrose. You, my Julia, will return to me to-morrow.”

I took this to be an intimation that she wished to be alone; and, accordingly, with a heavy heart, I left the convent. Alas! Em-

meline, it is too evident, that our beloved Louisa has not many days to live. Montrose is not less afflicted than myself; and laments that our sweet cousin will not consent to see him; but he could not have the cruelty to wish to disturb her tranquillity.

Adieu,

JULIA MONTROSE.

Three days after this letter was written Louisa breathed her last; displaying even in the moment of closing life, the same sweet and placid composure of soul, and pious resignation, which she had ever shewn in the midst of all her calamities. Lady Montrose, who was present when she expired, was often afterwards heard to declare, that there was something so holy, so elevating, in the death-bed-scene of this almost matchless woman, that to give way to grief for her departure, would have appeared a crime.

The Duchess of Beaufort's sufferings for the death of her son were too severe to re-

ceive any material augmentation from the intelligence that Louisa was no more.

On the news of his brother's death, Lord William Harcourt Lumley flew to the house of his mother. He found all the tenderness of a son rising in his heart, and from the sad event, which he most truly lamented, his reformation might fairly be dated. In one of his letters to Lord Montrose, he said,

"I endeavour, without ceasing, to assuage the grief of my mother, which is beginning to yield to resignation, in the sweet hope of meeting my brother at a not far distant period. It will be needless, Montrose, for you any longer to exhort me to reform. I have, hitherto spurned at virtue, from the idea, that had Edward been less obedient to its dictates, he would have been less miserable: But I am now confident, that there is something sweeter in the idea of my friends lamenting me, when I die, as they now do Edward, than in leading a life of selfish pleasure."

"Address

“Address your letters to my mother’s house (which I am determined not to leave while she wishes me to stay) to

Yours most sincerely,

W. HARCOURT LUMLEY.”

His Lordship continued thus to think, and when, two years afterwards, by the premature deaths of his two remaining brothers, he became Duke of Beaufort, his conduct and character were such, as his mother, had she lived to see him succeed to the dignity, would have gloried in.

The Earl of Montrose readily consented to entrust him with the happiness of his only remaining sister; and the Marquis of Halifax soon afterwards marrying Miss Clifford, sister-in-law to Lady Emmeline, the four families lived in the most perfect union; and could the Duke of Beaufort have shut his ears to the accounts of the behaviour of the widow of his brother, and Lady Cecilia, they would have been perfectly happy.

They

They were all too sensible of the happy release from sorrow that death had afforded to their beloved friends, to mourn for them without measure, or without end; but they never forgot them: and Emmeline and Julia often held up as an example to their daughters the virtues of the ENGLISH NUN.

